







J. C. Calhoun

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J O H N C. C A L H O U N.

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L I F E O F J O H N C. C A L H O U N.

CHAPTER I.

Including the Period from his Infancy until he entered Congress.

THE object of the present memoir of JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN is not to present a biography of the man, but to describe him as a statesman; to draw and to develop his character in that capacity, and to trace his eminent public services during a long career in one of the most eventful periods of human history. To dwell on a character like his, distinguished by every trait that should win esteem and command admiration, would be to the biographer a most attractive labour; but the pleasure of depicting a private life elevated by spotless purity and integrity, and a severe simplicity of tastes and habits, must be relinquished—except so far as occasional reference to his early history may become necessary—for the higher duty of portraying his intellectual features, and of explaining his motives and conduct as a public man. It is not our aim to commend him to public affection, or to enlist popular sympathy in his behalf, but rather to show to the world, not for his sake, but for its own instruction, the deep influence of this master-mind upon the great political events of his age. A fair and impartial review of the career of this eminent statesman in connexion with public affairs, is necessary to a thorough understanding of the course of our own government for nearly two thirds of its existence. Such a review, it is believed, would be no unacceptable offering at the present time. Throughout the whole period from 1811 up to the present time he has served the Union in the various capacities of Representative, Secretary of War, Vice-president, and Senator. He has taken a prominent and influential part in all the great questions which have arisen during that long interval; and, although he has asked a release from farther public service, it is not impossible that he may be destined to close his career as a statesman in another and a higher station. With faculties unclouded, with physical powers unimpaired, with a judgment matured by observation and experience, with an intrepidity untamed by the many trying vicissitudes of his extraordinary life, and with an activity whose energies are unabated by time, it is probable that the American people will not dispense with such services as he might render in the highest sphere open to American statesmen.

Mr. Calhoun is a native of South Carolina, and was born in Abbeville District on the 18th of March, 1782. His family is Irish on both sides. His father, Patrick Calhoun, was born in Donegal, in Ireland, but the family emigrated when Patrick was a child, first to Pennsylvania, where they remained some years, and then to the western part of Virginia, from whence they were driven by the Indians after Braddock's defeat. They

removed finally to South Carolina in 1756, when Patrick settled on the place where the subject of this sketch was born, and which still continues in the family of his younger brother. His mother, whose maiden name was Caldwell, was born in Charlotte County, Virginia. They had five children, one daughter and four sons, of whom John was the youngest but one. He was called after his maternal uncle, Major John Caldwell, whom the Tories had murdered in cold blood, and in his own yard, after destroying his house by fire. If time permitted, it might be interesting here to trace the effect which the traditions of the stirring scenes of a pioneer's life might have had upon the mind and character of young Calhoun. His paternal and maternal family both being Whig, they were exposed not only to hostile Indian incursions, but also to Tory outrages. They maintained their foothold on the soil despite the conflicts of an almost constant border warfare, and adhered to their country amid the horrors of civil strife and in the face of foreign invaders. But they had need both of courage and constancy to bear them through the severe trials to which they were exposed. Of three maternal uncles able to bear arms, one perished as we have before described, another fell at the battle of Cowpens with thirty sabre wounds, and a third, taken prisoner by the English, was immured for nine months in the dungeons of St. Augustine. Nor was Patrick Calhoun, the father, indebted to anything less than a strong arm and a stout heart for his escape from the perils which surrounded him. Upon one occasion, with thirteen other whites, he maintained a desperate conflict for hours with the Cherokee Indians, until, overwhelmed by superior numbers, he was forced to retreat, leaving seven of his companions dead upon the field. Three days after, they returned to bury their dead, and found the bodies of twenty-three Indian warriors, who had perished in the same conflict. At another time, he was singled out by an Indian distinguished for his prowess as a chief and for his skill with the rifle. The Indian taking to a tree, Calhoun secured himself behind a log, from whence he drew the Indian's fire four times by holding his hat on a stick a little above his hiding-place. The Indian at length exhibited a portion of his person in an effort to ascertain the effect of his shot, when he received a ball from his enemy in the shoulder, which forced him to fly. But the hat exhibited the traces of four balls by which it had been perforated. The effect of this mode of life upon a mind naturally strong and inquisitive was to create a certain degree of contempt for the forms of civilized life, and for all that was merely conventional in society. He claimed all the rights which nature and reason seemed to establish, and he acknowledged no obligation which was not supported by the like sanctions. It was under this conviction that, upon one occasion, he and his neighbours went down within twenty-three miles of Charleston, armed with rifles, to exercise a right of suffrage which had been disputed: a contest which ended in electing him to the Legislature of the state, in which body he served for thirty years. Relying upon virtue, reason, and courage as all that constituted the true moral strength of man, he attached too little importance to mere information, and never feared to encounter an adversary who, in that respect, had the advantage over him: a confidence which many of the events of his life seemed to justify. Indeed, he once appeared as his own advocate in a case in Virginia, in which he recovered a tract of land in despite of the regularly-trained disputants who sought to embarrass and defeat him. He opposed the Federal Constitution, because, as he said, it permitted other people than those of South Carolina to tax the people of South Carolina, and thus allowed taxation without representation, which was a violation of the fundamental principle of the Revolutionary struggle.

We have heard his son say that among his earliest recollections was one of a conversation when he was nine years of age, in which his father maintained that government to be best which allowed the largest amount of individual liberty compatible with social order and tranquillity, and insisted that the improvements in political science would be found to consist in throwing off many of the restraints then imposed by law, and deemed necessary to an organized society. It may well be supposed that his son John was an attentive and eager auditor, and such lessons as these must doubtless have served to encourage that free spirit of inquiry, and that intrepid zeal for truth for which he has been since so much distinguished. The mode of thinking which was thus encouraged may, perhaps, have compensated in some degree the want of those early advantages which are generally deemed indispensable to great intellectual progress. Of these he had comparatively few. But this was compensated by those natural gifts which give great minds the mastery over difficulties which the timid regard as insuperable. Indeed, we have here another of those rare instances in which the hardiness of natural genius is seen to defy all obstacles, and develops its flower and matures its fruit under circumstances apparently the most unpropitious.

The section of the country in which his family resided was then newly settled, and in a rude frontier state. There was not an academy in all the upper part of the state, and none within fifty miles, except one at about that distance in Columbia county, Georgia, which was kept by his brother-in-law, Mr. Waddell, a Presbyterian clergyman. There were but a few scattered schools in the whole of that region, and these were such as are usually found on the frontier, in which reading, writing, and arithmetic were imperfectly taught. At the age of thirteen he was placed under the charge of his brother-in-law to receive his education. Shortly after, his father died; this was followed by the death of his sister, Mrs. Waddell, within a few weeks, and the academy was then discontinued, which suspended his education before it had fairly commenced. His brother-in-law, with whom he was still left, was absent the greater part of the time, attending to his clerical duties, and his pupil thus found himself on a secluded plantation, without any white companion during the greater portion of the time. A situation apparently so unfavourable to improvement turned out, in his case, to be the reverse. Fortunately for him, there was a small circulating library in the house, of which his brother-in-law was librarian, and, in the absence of all company and amusements, that attracted his attention. His taste, although undirected, led him to history, to the neglect of novels and other lighter reading; and so deeply was he interested, that in a short time he read the whole of the small stock of historical works contained in the library, consisting of Rollin's *Ancient History*, Robertson's *Charles V.*, his *South America*, and Voltaire's *Charles XII.* After despatching these, he turned with like eagerness to Cook's *Voyages* (the large edition), a small volume of *Essays* by Brown, and Locke on the *Understanding*, which he read as far as the chapter on *Infinity*. All this was the work of but fourteen weeks. So intense was his application that his eyes became seriously affected, his countenance pallid, and his frame emaciated. His mother, alarmed at the intelligence of his health, sent for him home, where exercise and amusement soon restored his strength, and he acquired a fondness for hunting, fishing, and other country sports. Four years passed away in these pursuits, and in attention to the business of the farm while his elder brothers were absent, to the entire neglect of his education. But the time was not lost. Exercise and rural sports invigorated his frame, while his labours on the farm gave him a taste for agriculture, which he has always retained, and in the

pursuit of which he finds delightful occupation for his intervals of leisure from public duties.

About this time an incident occurred upon which turned his after life. His second brother, James, who had been placed at a counting-house in Charleston, returned to spend the summer of 1800 at home. John had determined to become a planter; but James, objecting to this, strongly urged him to acquire a good education, and pursue one of the learned professions. He replied that he was not averse to the course advised, but there were two difficulties in the way: one was to obtain the assent of his mother, without which he could not think of leaving her, and the other was the want of means. He said his property was small and his resolution fixed: he would far rather be a planter than a half-informed physician or lawyer. With this determination, he could not bring his mind to select either without ample preparation; but if the consent of their mother should be freely given, and he (James) thought he could so manage his property as to keep him in funds for seven years of study preparatory to entering his profession, he would leave home and commence his education the next week. His mother and brother agreeing to his conditions, he accordingly left home the next week for Dr. Waddell's, who had married again, and resumed his academy in Columbia county, Georgia. This was in June, 1800, in the beginning of his 19th year, at which time it may be said he commenced his education, his tuition having been previously very imperfect, and confined to reading, writing, and arithmetic in an ordinary country school. His progress here was so rapid that in two years he entered the junior class of Yale College, and graduated with distinction in 1804, just four years from the time he commenced his Latin grammar. He was highly esteemed by Dr. Dwight, then the president of the college, although they differed widely in politics, and at a time when political feelings were intensely bitter. The doctor was an ardent Federalist, and Mr. Calhoun was one of a very few, in a class of more than seventy, who had the firmness openly to avow and maintain the opinions of the Republican party, and, among others, that the people were the only legitimate source of political power. Dr. Dwight entertained a different opinion. In a recitation during the senior year, on the chapter on Politics in Paley's Moral Philosophy, the doctor, with the intention of eliciting his opinion, propounded to Mr. Calhoun the question, as to the legitimate source of power. He did not decline an open and direct avowal of his opinion. A discussion ensued between them, which exhausted the time allotted for the recitation, and in which the pupil maintained his opinions with such vigour of argument and success as to elicit from his distinguished teacher the declaration, in speaking of him to a friend, that "the young man had talent enough to be President of the United States," which he accompanied by a prediction that he would one day attain that station.

An English oration was assigned to Mr. Calhoun at the Commencement. He selected for his thesis, "The qualifications necessary to constitute a perfect statesman," and prepared his oration, but was prevented from delivering it by a severe indisposition. After graduating, he commenced the study of the law, and devoted three years to that and miscellaneous reading, eighteen months of which were spent at Litchfield, Connecticut, where a celebrated law-school was kept at that time by Judge Reeves and Mr. Gould. He acquired great distinction at the school. It was there that he successfully cultivated, in a debating society, his talents for extemporary speaking. The residue of the time was spent in the offices of Mr. De Saussure, of Charleston (afterward chancellor), and of Mr. George Bowie, of Abbeville. Having spent seven years in preparation, according to his determination when he commenced his education, and having passed his examination for admission to the bar, he began the practice of law in his native district. He rose at once into full practice, taking a stand with the oldest and ablest lawyers on the circuit

was led on his own. as in Bar.

He continued but a short time at the bar. While he was yet a student, after his return from Litchfield to Abbeville, an incident occurred which agitated the whole Union, and contributed to give to Mr. Calhoun's life, at that early period, the political direction which it has ever since kept—the attack of the English frigate *Leopard* on the American frigate *Chesapeake*. It led to public meetings all over the Union, in which resolutions were passed expressive of the indignation of the people, and their firm resolve to stand by the government in whatever measure it might think proper to adopt to redress the outrage. At that called in his native district, he was appointed one of the committee to prepare a report and resolutions to be presented to a meeting to be convened to receive them on an appointed day. Mr. Calhoun was requested by the committee to prepare them, which he did so much to their satisfaction, that he was appointed to address the meeting on the occasion before the vote was taken on the resolutions. The meeting was large, and it was the first time he had ever appeared before the public. He acquitted himself with such success that his name was presented as a candidate for the state Legislature at the next election. He was elected at the head of the ticket, and at a time when the prejudice against lawyers was so strong in the district that no one of the profession who had offered for many years previously had ever succeeded. This was the commencement of his political life, and the first evidence he ever received of the confidence of the people of the state—a confidence which has continued ever since constantly increasing, without interruption or reaction, for the third of a century; and which, for its duration, universality, and strength, may be said to be without a parallel in any other state, or in the case of any other public man.

He served two sessions in the state Legislature. It was not long after he took his seat before he distinguished himself. Early in the session an informal meeting of the Republican portion of the members was called to nominate candidates for the places of President and Vice-president of the United States. Mr. Madison was nominated for the presidency without opposition. When the nomination for the vice-presidency was presented, Mr. Calhoun embraced the occasion to present his opinion in reference to coming events, as bearing on the nomination. He reviewed the state of the relations between the United States and Great Britain and France, the two great belligerents which were then struggling for mastery, and in their struggle trampling on the rights of neutrals, and especially ours; he touched on the restrictive system which had been resorted to by the government to protect our rights, and expressed his doubt of its efficacy, and the conviction that a war with Great Britain would be unavoidable. "It was," he said, "in this state of things, of the utmost importance that the ranks of the Republican party should be preserved undisturbed and unbroken by faction or discord." He then adverted to the fact, that a discontented portion of the party had given unequivocal evidence of rallying round the name of the venerable vice-president, George Clinton (whose re-nomination was proposed), and of whom he spoke highly; but he gave it as his opinion, that should he be nominated and re-elected, he would become the nucleus of all the discontented portion of the party, and thus make a formidable division in its ranks should the country be forced into war. These persons, he predicted, would ultimately rally under De Witt Clinton, the nephew, whom he described as a man of distinguished talents and aspiring disposition. To avoid the danger, he suggested for nomination the name of John Langdon, of New-Hampshire, of whom he spoke highly both as to talents and patriotism.

It was Mr. Calhoun's first effort in a public capacity. The manner and matter excited great applause; and when it is recollected that these remarks preceded the declaration of war more than three years, and how events happened according to his anticipations, it affords a striking proof of that sagacity, at so early a period, for which he has since been so much distinguished. It at once gave him a stand among the most distinguished members of the Legislature.

During the short period he remained a member, he originated and carried through several measures, which proved in practice to be salutary, and have become a permanent portion of the legislation of the state.

CHAPTER II.

Including the period from his entering Congress until his appointment as Secretary of War.

IN the mean time, the growing difficulties in our foreign relations, especially with Great Britain, impressed the community at large with the belief that war with that formidable power was approaching. The impression naturally turned the attention of the people, in selecting candidates for Congress, to those whom they believed to be the most competent to serve them at so trying a period. The eyes of the congressional district in which Mr. Calhoun resided were turned towards him, and he was elected by an overwhelming majority over his opponent. This was in the fall of 1810, and he took his seat in the councils of the nation a year afterward, in the first session of the twelfth Congress, known as the war session, with his two distinguished colleagues, Mr. Cheves and Mr. Lowndes, who, like himself, had been elected in reference to the critical condition of the country. His reputation had preceded him, and he was placed second on the Committee of Foreign Relations, which, in the existing state of our relations with the two great belligerents, was regarded as the most important of the committees, and was, accordingly, filled by members selected in reference to the magnitude of its duties. The other distinguished individuals who composed it were Peter B. Porter, the chairman, and Felix Grundy, of Tennessee, on the Republican side, and John Randolph and Philip Barton Key on the other. It was, indeed, an eventful period of our history, and the duties which it imposed on the committee were of the most difficult and responsible character.

It is not easy, at this day, to estimate the magnitude of the crisis. Our present government had its origin just preceding the commencement of the great Revolution in France, which, in its progress, involved her in a war without example or parallel in the history of the world, taking into estimate its cause, extent, duration, the immensity of force brought into conflict, the skill which directed it, the variety and magnitude of its incidents, and the importance of the stake at issue. England was the great antagonist power to France in this mighty struggle, whose shocks reached even our distant shores. From the beginning, our mutual rights were invaded by both sides, and our peace endangered; but so recently had our government been established, so hazardous was it to put it to the test of war, and especially in such a struggle, and so advantageous to our commerce and prosperity was our position as a neutral power, while all Europe was at war, that it became the fixed policy of the government to preserve peace and bear wrongs, so long as the one could be preserved and the other endured without sacrificing the honour and independence of the country. This pacific and wise policy was, with some slight exceptions, steadily pursued for more than fifteen years. At length came the Berlin and Milan Decrees on the part of France, and the hostile orders in council on the part of England, which forced on our government the embargo and other restrictive measures, adopted from an anxious desire of preserving peace, and in the hope of obtaining respect for our rights from one or other of the two belligerents. Experience soon proved how impotent these measures were, and how fallacious was our hope. The encroachments on our rights and independence continued to advance, till England at length pushed her aggressions so far that our commerce was reduced to a state of dependance as complete as when we were her colonies, and our ships were converted, at the same time, into a recruiting-ground

to man her navy. Not a vessel of ours was permitted to reach Europe but through her ports, and more than 3000 of our hardy seamen were impressed into her service, to fight battles in which they had no interest. Our independence, as far as the ocean was concerned, had become an empty name; but so hazardous was it to take up arms in the unprepared state of the country, and to be drawn into a struggle apparently so fearful and interminable between the two first powers on earth, that the stoutest and boldest might well have paused at taking the step.

It was in such a crisis of our affairs that Mr. Calhoun took his seat in Congress. To him it was not unexpected. He had little confidence from the beginning in the peaceful measures resorted to for the redress of our wrongs, and saw beforehand that the final alternatives would be war or submission, and had deliberately made up his mind, that to lose independence, and to sink down into a state of acknowledged inferiority, depending for security on forbearance, and not on our capacity and disposition to defend ourselves, would be the worst calamity which could befall the country. According to his opinion, the ability of the government to defend the country against external danger, and to cause its rights to be respected from without, was as essential as protection against violence within, and that, if it should prove incompetent to meet successfully the hazard of a just and necessary war, it would fail in one of the two great objects for which it was instituted, and that the sooner it was known the better. With these fixed opinions, his voice, on taking his seat, was for the most decisive course.

The President's Message, at the opening of the session, was, in its general features, warlike, and yet there were expressions of an ambiguous character, which led many to doubt what course of policy was really intended by the administration. The portion which related to our affairs with other powers was referred to the Committee of Foreign Relations. The excitement in the country was intense, and party spirit never ran higher. All eyes were turned on the proceedings of the committee. They reported, at an early period of the session, resolutions strongly recommending immediate and extensive preparations to defend our rights and redress our wrongs by an appeal to arms. The debate was opened by the chairman, Mr. Porter, and he was followed on the same side by Mr. Grundy. It was allotted to Mr. Calhoun to follow Mr. Randolph, who, on the opposite side, succeeded Mr. Grundy in an able and eloquent speech. The discussion from the beginning excited profound interest, both in the body and the crowded audience daily assembled in the lobby and galleries, and this interest had increased as the discussion advanced. It was Mr. Calhoun's first speech in Congress, except a few brief remarks on the Apportionment Bill. The trial was a severe one; expectation was high. The question was of the greatest magnitude, and he to whom he had to reply, a veteran statesman of unsurpassed eloquence. How he acquitted himself, the papers of the day will best attest. The remarks of the Richmond Enquirer, then, as now, a leading journal on the Republican side, may be taken as an example. Mr. Ritchie, in his remarks on the speeches, after characterizing Mr. Randolph's, said: "Mr. Calhoun is clear and precise in his reasoning, marching up directly to the object of his attack, and felling down the errors of his opponent with the club of Hercules; not eloquent in his tropes and figures, but, like Fox, in the moral elevation of his sentiments; free from personality, yet full of those fine touches of indignation, which are the severest cut to the man of feeling. His speech, like a fine drawing, abounds in those lights and shades which set off each other: the cause of his country is robed in light, while her opponents are wrapped in darkness. It were a contracted wish that Mr. Calhoun were a Virginian; though, after the quota she has furnished with opposition talents, such a wish might be forgiven us. We beg leave to participate, as Americans and friends of our country, in the honours of South Carolina. We hail this young

Carolinian as one of the master-spirits who stamp their names upon the age in which they live."

When Mr. Calhoun sat down, he was greeted by the great body of the party for his successful effort, and thenceforward took rank with the ablest and most influential members of the body. But, as clear as it appeared to him that the period had arrived when a resort to arms could no longer be avoided without sacrificing the honour and interest of the country, such was far from being the feeling of many, even of the Republican members of the body. Many, who saw the necessity, hesitated; some from the great hazard of war, others from the want of preparation, or the difficulty of selecting between the belligerents, when both had so grossly violated our rights; and not a few from a lingering confidence in the Non-importation Act, and other restrictive measures, as the means of redressing our wrongs. Mr. Calhoun, although he approved of the motive which had led to a resort to those measures in the first instance, and regarded them as wise temporary expedients, never had any confidence in them as instruments of avenging or redressing the wrongs of the country. Believing that they had accomplished all they ever could, and that a latent attachment to them was one of the principal impediments to a resort to arms, he did not hesitate to attack the whole system.

To realize the boldness and hazard of such a step, it must be borne in mind that the support or opposition to the system had been for many years the main test of party fidelity, and that party spirit was never higher than at the time. But as strongly as he was attached to the administration, to the Republican party, and their general policy, and opposed as he was to the Federalists, he did not hesitate, young as he was, when he believed duty and the interest of the country required it, to place himself above all party considerations, and to expose manfully the defects of a system which had been so long cherished and defended by the party to which he belonged. The following extracts from a speech delivered against it will give in his own language some of the most prominent objections which he urged against the system, and afford, at the same time, a fair specimen of his powers of reasoning and eloquence at that early period, and of the lofty and patriotic sentiments which actuated him in the line of policy that he advocated.

"The restrictive system," he said, "as a mode of resistance, or as a means of obtaining redress, has never been a favourite one with me. I wish not to censure the motives which dictated it, or attribute weakness to those who first resorted to it for a restoration of our rights. But, sir, I object to the restrictive system because it does not suit the genius of the people, or that of our government, or the geographical character of our country. We are a people essentially active; I may say we are pre-eminently so. No passive system can suit such a people; in action superior to all others, in patient endurance inferior to none. Nor does it suit the genius of our government. Our government is founded on freedom, and hates coercion. To make the restrictive system effective, requires the most arbitrary laws. England, with the severest penal statutes, has not been able to exclude prohibited articles; and Napoleon, with all his power and vigilance, was obliged to resort to the most barbarous laws to enforce his Continental system."

After showing how the whole mercantile community must become corrupt by the temptations and facilities for smuggling, and how the public opinion of the commercial community (upon which the system must depend for its enforcement) becomes opposed to it, and gives sanction to its violation, he proceeds:

"But there are other objections to the system. It renders government odious. The farmer inquires why he gets no more for his produce, and he is told it is owing to the embargo, or commercial restrictions. In this he sees only the hand of his own government, and not the acts of violence and injustice which this system is intended to counteract. His censures fall on the govern-

ment. This is an unhappy state of the public mind; and even, I might say, in a government resting essentially on public opinion, a dangerous one. In war it is different. Its privation, it is true, may be equal or greater; but the public mind, under the strong impulses of that state of things, becomes steeled against sufferings. The difference is almost infinite between the passive and active state of the mind. Tie down a hero, and he feels the puncture of a pin: throw him into battle, and he is almost insensible to vital gashes. So in war. Impelled alternately by hope and fear, stimulated by revenge, depressed by shame, or elevated by victory, the people become invincible. No privation can shake their fortitude; no calamity break their spirit. Even when equally successful, the contrast between the two systems is striking. War and restriction may leave the country equally exhausted; but the latter not only leaves you poor, but, even when successful, dispirited, divided, discontented, with diminished patriotism, and the morals of a considerable portion of your people corrupted. Not so in war. In that state, the common danger unites all, strengthens the bonds of society, and feeds the flame of patriotism. The national character mounts to energy. In exchange for the expenses and privations of war, you obtain military and naval skill, and a more perfect organization of such parts of your administration as are connected with the science of national defence. Sir, are these advantages to be counted as trifles in the present state of the world? Can they be measured by moneyed valuation? I would prefer a single victory over the enemy, by sea or land, to all the good we shall ever derive from the continuation of the Non-importation Act. I know not that a victory would produce an equal pressure on the enemy; but I am certain of what is of greater consequence, it would be accompanied by more salutary effects on ourselves. The memory of Saratoga, Princeton, and Eutaw is immortal. It is there you will find the country's boast and pride—the inexhaustible source of great and heroic sentiments. But what will history say of restriction? What examples worthy of imitation will it furnish to posterity? What pride, what pleasure, will our children find in the events of such times? Let me not be considered romantic. This nation ought to be taught to rely on its courage, its fortitude, its skill and virtue, for protection. These are the only safeguards in the hour of danger. Man was endued with these great qualities for his defence. There is nothing about him that indicates that he is to conquer by endurance. He is not incrustated in a shell; he is not taught to rely upon his insensibility, his passive suffering, for defence. No, sir: it is on the invincible mind, on a magnanimous nature, he ought to rely. Here is the superiority of our kind: it is these that render man the lord of the world. It is the destiny of his condition that nations rise above nations, as they are endued in a greater degree with these brilliant qualities."

But this is not the only instance in which Mr. Calhoun, at this early stage of his public life, manifested a spirit above party influence or control, that spirit which he has so often since exhibited, when duty and patriotism demanded it. No one appreciates more highly the value of party ties within proper limits, or adheres more firmly to his party within them, than he does. He never permits them to influence him beyond those necessary limits. Acting accordingly, he did not hesitate to give his cordial and warm support to a bill for the increase of the navy, reported by his able and distinguished colleague, who was then chairman of the Naval Committee, although, at and previous to that time, the great body of the Republican party was and had been opposed to it. It was owing to the decided support which it received from Mr. Cheeves, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Lowndes, and Mr. Clay, and its brilliant achievements afterward (even then confidently anticipated by them), that it has since become with the whole Union the favourite arm of defence.

As prominent as was the situation of Mr. Calhoun at the commencement of this eventful session, as the second on the most important committee, it became

still more so in its progress. The chairman, Mr. Porter, withdrew from Congress, and Mr. C. found himself at the head of the committee, which, in addition to its peculiar duties, was charged, by a vote of the House, with a large portion of those properly belonging to the Committee on Military Affairs. Few individuals with so little parliamentary experience have ever been placed in so responsible a situation. He had never before served in a deliberative body except for two short sessions in the Legislature of his own state; making together but nine weeks. With such limited experience, it is difficult to conceive a situation of the kind more arduous than that in which he was placed at the head of such a committee at such a period, when party spirit was at its height and the opposition under the guidance of leaders distinguished for their talents and experience; and yet, so ample were his resources, and so great his aptitude for business, that he not only sustained himself, but acquired honour and distinction for the ability with which he discharged the duties of his station.

It will not be attempted to trace Mr. Calhoun's course through this laborious and long-to-be-remembered session. It is sufficient to say that he exhibited throughout the same zeal and ability with which he commenced it. Near its close he reported and carried through the bill declaring war against Great Britain—a war under all circumstances fairly entitled to its appellation as the second war of independence. The proceedings were in secret session, contrary to his opinion and wishes.

Such was the brilliant career of Mr. Calhoun during his first session, and that under the most responsible and trying circumstances. Much of his success is to be attributed to his early and wise determination not to come forward till he had laid the foundation in a solid education, and fully prepared himself to act his part in life. Without them, the mere force of natural talents could not have carried him successfully through the difficulties he had to encounter at the outset of his congressional career.

The declaration of war fixed the policy of the government for the time, and the discussions in Congress during its continuance turned, for the most part, on questions relating to the finances, the army, the navy, the mode of conducting the war, and its success and disasters. These gave rise to many warm and animated debates of deep interest and excitement at the time, and in most of which Mr. Calhoun took a prominent part, and fully sustained the reputation he had acquired for ability and eloquence; but as the subjects were generally of a temporary character, and have long since lost much of their interest, the object of this sketch does not require that they should be particularly noticed. They will, accordingly, be passed in silence, and the notice of the events of the period confined to those that may be regarded as exceptions to the ordinary party discussions of the day. This course is the more readily adopted, because it is believed that the whole country is disposed to do ample justice to the patriotism, the intelligence, and ability with which he performed his part during this eventful period of our history.

The first incident that will be noticed took place at the commencement of the session immediately succeeding the declaration of war. South Carolina had in that Congress an unusual number of men of talents: General D. R. Williams, Langdon Cheves, William Lowndes, and the subject of this sketch, all of whom were entitled to prominent positions in the arrangement of committees. Mr. Calhoun was the youngest. The speaker was embarrassed. There was a difficulty in placing so many from one state, and that a small one, at the head of prominent committees, and Mr. Calhoun, with his characteristic disinterestedness, cheerfully assented to be placed second on that at the head of which he had served with so much distinction at the preceding session. Mr. Smilie, an old and highly-respectable member from Pennsylvania, was placed at the head of the committee. At its first meeting the chairman, without previously intimating his intention, moved that Mr. Calhoun should be elected

chairman. He objected, and insisted that Mr. Smilie should act as chairman, and declared his perfect willingness to serve under him ; but he was, notwithstanding, unanimously elected, and the strongest proof that could be given of the highly satisfactory manner in which he had previously discharged his duty was thus afforded. In this conviction, and as illustrative of the same disinterested character, when the speaker's chair became vacant by the appointment of Mr. Clay as one of the commissioners to negotiate for peace, Mr. Calhoun was solicited by many of the most influential members of the party to become a candidate for it ; but he peremptorily refused to oppose his distinguished colleague, Mr. Cheves, who was elected.

At an early period of the same session, a question out of the ordinary course, and which excited much interest at the time, became the subject of discussion, that of the merchants' bonds. The Non-importation Act (one of the restrictive measures) was in force when war was declared. Under its operation a large amount of capital had been accumulated abroad, and especially in England, the proceeds of exports that could not be returned in consequence of the prohibition of imports. The owners, when they saw war was inevitable, became alarmed, and gave orders for the return of their property. It came back, for the most part, in merchandise, which was subject to forfeiture under the act. The owners petitioned for the remission of the forfeiture, and permission to enter the goods on paying the war duties. The secretary of the treasury, on the other hand, proposed to remit the forfeiture on condition that the amount of the value of the goods should be loaned to the government by the owners. Mr. Cheves, who was at the head of the Committee of Ways and Means, reported in favour of the petition, and supported his report by an able speech. The question had assumed much of a party character, but it did not deter Mr. Calhoun from an independent exercise of his judgment. He believed that the act never contemplated a case of the kind, and that to enforce, under such circumstances, a forfeiture amounting to millions, which would embrace a large class of citizens, would be against the spirit of the criminal code of a free and enlightened people. But waving these more general views, he thought the only alternative was to remit the forfeiture, as prayed for by the owners, or to enforce it according to the provisions of the act : that, if the importation was such a violation as justly and properly incurred the forfeiture, then the act ought to be enforced ; but if not, the forfeiture ought to be remitted ; and that the government had no right, and if it had, it was unbecoming its dignity to convert a penal act into the means of making a forced loan. Thus thinking, he seconded the effort of his distinguished colleague, and enforced his views in a very able speech. The result was, that the forfeiture was remitted, and the goods admitted on paying duties in conformity to the course recommended by the committee.

There was another case in which, at this period, he evinced his firmness and independence. The administration still adhered to the restrictive policy, and even after the war was declared the President recommended the renewal of the Embargo. Mr. Calhoun, as has been shown, opposed, on principle, the whole system as a substitute for war, and he was still more opposed to it as an auxiliary to it. He held it, in that light, not only as inefficient and delusive, but as calculated to impair the means of the country, and to divert a greater share of its capital and industry to manufactures than could be, on the return of peace, sustained by the government on any sound principles of justice or policy. He thought war itself, without restrictions, would give so great a stimulus, that no small embarrassment and loss would result on its termination, in despite of all that could be done for them, while, at the same time, he expressed his willingness, when peace came, to protect the establishments that might grow up during its continuance, as far as it could be fairly done.

The Embargo failed on the first recommendation : but, at the next session, being recommended again, it succeeded. Mr. Calhoun, at the earnest entreaties

of friends, and to prevent division in the party when their union was so necessary to the success of the war, gave it a reluctant vote.

But the time was approaching when an opportunity would be afforded him to carry out successfully his views in reference to the restrictive system, and that with the concurrence of the party. The disasters of Bonaparte in the Russian campaign, his consequent fall and dethronement in the early part of 1814, and the triumph of Great Britain, after one of the longest, and, altogether, the most remarkable contests on record, offered that opportunity, which he promptly seized. This great event, which terminated the war in Europe, left Great Britain, flushed with victory, in full possession of all the vast resources, in men, money, and materials, by which she had brought that mighty conflict to a successful termination, to be turned against us. It was a fearful state of things; but, as fearful as it was of itself, it was made doubly so by the internal condition of the country, and the course of the opposition. Blinded by party zeal, they beheld with joy or indifference what was calculated to appal the patriotic. Forgetting the country, and intent only on a party triumph, they seized the opportunity to embarrass the government. Their great effort was made against the Loan Bill—a measure necessary to carry on the war. Instead of supporting it, they denounced the war itself as unjust and inexpedient; and they proclaimed its farther prosecution, in so unequal a contest, as hopeless, now that the whole power of the British Empire would be brought to bear against us. Mr. Calhoun replied in a manner highly characteristic of the man, undaunted, able, and eloquent. None can read this speech, even at this distance of time, without kindling under that elevated tone of feeling, which wisdom, emanating from a spirit lofty and self-possessed under the most trying circumstances, only can inspire. In order to show the justice and expediency of the war, he took an historical view of the maritime usurpations of Great Britain, from the celebrated order in council of 1756, to the time of the discussion, and demonstrated that her aggressions were not accidental, or dependant on peculiar circumstances, but were the result of a fixed system of policy, intended to establish her supremacy on the ocean. After giving a luminous view of the origin and character of the wrongs we had suffered from her, he clearly showed the flimsiness of the pretext by which she sought to justify her conduct, as well as that of the opposition to excuse her, and dwelt upon the folly of hoping to obtain redress by sheathing the sword or throwing ourselves on her justice. The following extract, taken from the conclusion, will afford an example of his lofty and animating eloquence:

“This country is left alone to support the rights of neutrals. Perilous is the condition, and arduous the task. We are not intimidated. We stand opposed to British usurpation, and, by our spirit and efforts, have done all in our power to save the last vestiges of neutral rights. Yes, our embargoes, non-intercourse, non-importation, and, finally, war, are all manly exertions to preserve the rights of this and other nations from the deadly grasp of British maritime policy. But (say our opponents) these efforts are lost, and our condition hopeless. If so, it only remains for us to assume the garb of our condition. We must submit, humbly submit, crave pardon, and hug our chains. It is not wise to provoke where we cannot resist. But first let us be well assured of the hopelessness of our state before we sink into submission. On what do our opponents rest their despondent and slavish belief? On the recent events in Europe? I admit they are great, and well calculated to impose on the imagination. Our enemy never presented a more imposing exterior. His fortune is at the flood. But I am admonished by universal experience, that such prosperity is the most precarious of human conditions. From the flood the tide dates its ebb. From the meridian the sun commences his decline. Depend upon it, there is more of sound philosophy than of fiction in the fickleness which poets attribute to fortune. Prosperity has its weakness, adversity its strength. In

many respects our enemy has lost by those very changes which seem so very much in his favour. He can no more claim to be struggling for existence ; no more to be fighting the battles of the world in defence of the liberties of mankind. The magic cry of 'French influence' is lost. In this very hall we are not strangers to that sound. Here, even here, the cry of 'French influence,' that baseless fiction, that phantom of faction now banished, often resounded. I rejoice that the spell is broken by which it was attempted to bind the spirit of this youthful nation. The minority can no longer act under cover, but must come out and defend their opposition on its own intrinsic merits. Our example can scarcely fail to produce its effects on other nations interested in the maintenance of maritime rights. But if, unfortunately, we should be left alone to maintain the contest, and if, which may God forbid, necessity should compel us to yield for the present, yet our generous efforts will not have been lost. A mode of thinking and a tone of sentiment have gone abroad which must stimulate to future and more successful struggles. What could not be effected with eight millions of people will be done with twenty. The great cause will never be yielded—no, never, never! Sir, I hear the future audibly announced in the past—in the splendid victories over the Guerriere, Java, and Macedonian. We, and all nations, by these victories, are taught a lesson never to be forgotten. Opinion is power. The charm of British naval invincibility is gone."

Such was the animated strain by which Mr. Calhoun roused the spirit of the government and country under a complication of adverse circumstances calculated to overwhelm the feeble and appal the stoutest. Never faltering, never doubting, never despairing of the Republic, he was at once the hope of the party and the beacon light to the country.

But he did not limit his efforts to repelling the attacks of the opposition, and animating the hopes of the government and country. He saw that the very events which exposed us to so much danger, made a mighty change in the political and commercial relations of Continental Europe, which had been so long closed against foreign commerce, in consequence of the long war that grew out of the French Revolution, and of those hostile orders and decrees of the two great belligerents, which had for many years almost annihilated all lawful commerce between the Continent of Europe and the rest of the world. The events that dethroned Bonaparte put an end to that state of things, and left all the powers of Europe free to resume their former commercial pursuits. He saw in all this that the time had come to free the government entirely from the shackles of the restrictive system, to which he had been so long opposed ; and he, accordingly, followed up his speech by a bill to repeal the Embargo and the Non-importation Act. He rested their repeal on the ground that they were a portion of the restrictive policy, and showed that the ground on which it had been heretofore sustained was, that it was a pacific policy, growing out of the extraordinary state of the world at the time it was adopted, and, of course, dependant on the continuance of that state. "It was a time," he said, "when every power on the Continent was arrayed against Great Britain, under the overwhelming influence of Bonaparte, and no country but ours interested in maintaining neutral rights. The fact of all the Continental ports being closed against her, gave to our restrictive measures an efficacy which they no longer had, now that they were open to her." He admitted that the system had been continued too long, and been too far extended, and that he was opposed to it as a substitute for war, but contended that there would be no inconsistency on the part of the government in abandoning a policy founded on a state of things which no longer existed. "But now," said he, "the Continental powers are neutrals, as between us and Great Britain. We are contending for the freedom of trade, and ought to use every exertion to attach to our cause Russia, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, and all other nations which have an interest in the freedom of the seas. The maritime rights assumed by Great Britain infringe on the

rights of all neutral powers, and if we should now open our ports and trade to the nations of the Continent, it would involve Great Britain in a very awkward and perplexing dilemma. She must either permit us to enjoy a very lucrative commerce with them, or, by attempting to exclude them from our ports by her system of paper blockades, she would force them to espouse our cause. The option which would thus be tendered her would so embarrass her as to produce a stronger desire for peace than ten years' continuance of the present system, inoperative as it is now rendered by a change of circumstances." These views had the desired effect, and the bill passed.

The subsequent session (that of 1814-15) was the last of the war sessions. It was short, terminating on the 4th of March. It was one of much excitement, but was principally distinguished for the project of a bank, submitted by the administration, and intended for the relief of the financial difficulties of the government. Upon this measure Mr. Calhoun differed from the administration and a large portion of the party.

It so happened that he was detained at home by sickness, and did not take his seat for several weeks after the commencement of the session, and his place as chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations was filled by the late secretary of state, Mr. Forsyth. He found, on his arrival, the plan of a bank agreed on, and he was especially requested by the secretary of the treasury, with whom he had the kindest relations, and several members of the Committee of Ways and Means, to give it his particular attention, which he promised to do. His predisposition was strongly in favour of a bank of some kind. It was then generally thought to be indispensable to the prosecution of the war. With this disposition, and a strong desire to meet what were the views of the secretary and the administration, and of his friends on the Ways and Means, he took up the plan for examination. The whole subject of banking, theoretically and practically, was, in a great measure, new to him. He had never given it a serious and careful examination, and his mind, though favourably disposed to the plan, was open to the reception of truth.

The leading features of the plan were a bank of \$50,000,000 of capital, to consist, with the exception of a few millions of specie, entirely of the stock issued by the government for loans made to carry on the war. It was not to pay specie during the war, nor till three years after its termination, and was to lend the government, whenever required, \$30,000,000, at six per cent., to carry on the war. With all his prepossessions in its favour, he was soon struck by the fact, that the great leading object was to create a machine for lending money, not on the means or credit of the bank, or the individuals to be incorporated, but of the government itself; for the bank would not be bound to pay its notes, and would have little or nothing on which to lend but the stock of the government. The whole contrivance was, virtually, under the specious show of a loan, for the government to borrow back its own credit at six per cent., for which it had already stipulated to pay a high interest—not less, on an average, than eight per cent. Those who had lent the government, alleging that they had loaned all they had, modestly proposed to lend it, on its own credit, as much as it might need to carry on the war, if it would incorporate them under the magic name of "a bank," exempt them from the payment of their debts as a corporation, give them the use of the public money, and not only endorse their notes by receiving them for its dues, but also pay them away as money in their disbursements.

It was impossible for a mind constituted as Mr. Calhoun's not to see the whole effects of the scheme, or to give its assent to it, by whomsoever contrived, or by whatever name called. To him, no alternative was left but to sacrifice his judgment, or to differ from the administration and many of his friends who were anxious to have his support; but, as responsible and painful as was the alternative, he did not hesitate.

When the bill came up he opposed it in a speech, in which he briefly stated his objections; and such was its effect that, though the measure had the support of the administration, and the whole of the Committee of Ways and Means but one, it was struck out, and the amendment he proposed was substituted by an overwhelming majority. His substitute was, that the government should use its own credit directly in the shape of treasury notes, to be issued to meet its wants, and to be funded in the bank in the form of stock at six per cent.; that the bank should be bound to pay its notes at all times, and should make the government no loans but short ones, in anticipation of its current revenue. By the issue of treasury notes, to be funded in the bank, he proposed to obtain the immediate supplies to carry on the government; and, by establishing a specie-paying bank, under proper restrictions, he hoped to sustain a strong position, from which the currency, then consisting, south of New-England, exclusively of the notes of suspended banks, might be restored to the specie standard on the return of peace. His substitute was, in its turn, defeated. Two other bills, differently modified, were successively introduced, and were both defeated—one by the casting vote of the speaker, Mr. Cheeves, and the other by the President, who vetoed it on the ground that, as modified, it would not afford the relief required by the treasury.

The greater part of the session had been spent in these various attempts to pass a bill, and many who entirely agreed with Mr. Calhoun in his view of the subject, and had stood fast by him at first, now yielded to the pressure. Finally, a rally was made, a short time before the close of the session, to pass a bill, and it was again introduced in the Senate much improved in some of its objectionable features, but still defective enough to prevent him and the friends who stood by him from giving it their support. It speedily passed that body, and was sent to the House, where it was pressed through to its passage with all possible despatch. On the question of ordering it to the third reading, Mr. Calhoun made a few remarks, in which he warned the House against adopting a measure which a great majority decidedly disapproved, but for which they were prepared to vote under a supposed necessity, which did not exist. He concluded by saying that the bill was so objectionable that, were it not for the supposed necessity, if, for instance, the news of peace should arrive before its passage, it would not receive fifteen votes, and concluded by saying that he would reserve a full statement of his objections to the bill for the question on the passage to be taken the next day, when he intended to make a final stand against it, and appeal to the public for the vindication of his course. At the time there was not the slightest rumour or indication of peace, and no one expected it. On the contrary, every indication was, that the war would be pushed with vigour in the approaching campaign. The attack had been made on New-Orleans, and by every mail it was expected to hear of its fate; and yet, strange as it may seem, that very day, subsequent to the adjournment of the House, a despatch, sent on by a mercantile house in New-York, to be forwarded by the mail to the South to its agents, arrived in the city, with the intelligence that a vessel had come in after the departure of the mail, bringing the treaty of peace. The member to whom it was sent was so struck with the coincidence, that he informed Mr. Calhoun of the fact in confidence. By some means, a rumour got out that there was a late arrival at New-York bringing important intelligence. Next day the friends of the bill made an effort to push it through before the arrival of the mail in the afternoon. Mr. Calhoun moved to lay the bill on the table, saying that there was a hope that the mail from New-York, which would arrive in a few hours, might bring intelligence that would have an important bearing on the bill. The vote on his motion verified his prediction. The mail arrived with the treaty of

peace. It was then proposed to him to modify the bill in conformity with his views, if he would withdraw his opposition. He refused, and demanded other and severer restrictions than those which he had heretofore proposed. An attempt was then made to take up the bill and pass it, which failed by a large majority.

It was thus his sagacity and firmness, under the most trying circumstances, against the whole weight of the administration, defeated a measure, which, if it had been adopted as first proposed, would have been followed by consequences more disastrous than could well be anticipated. He had the satisfaction to receive the thanks of many of the members for its defeat, who but a short time before were ready to denounce him for his resistance to it. It is now to be regretted that none of Mr. Calhoun's speeches against the measure were published. He declined publishing at the time on the ground that his object was to defeat the bill, but to do so without distracting the party or impairing confidence in the administration, on which the success of the war so much depended. For that reason, he not only avoided publishing, but bore patiently the denunciations daily levelled against him for his opposition to the bill. On all other measures of the session he gave the administration an active and hearty support. It was, indeed, a rule with him, when compelled to differ from his party on an important measure, to limit his opposition strictly to the measure itself, and to avoid, both in manner and matter, all that could by possibility give offence. By a rigid observance, too, of this rule, he succeeded in maintaining his individual opinion in reference to all important questions on which he differed from his party without weakening his standing with them.

The transition from a state of war to that of peace gave rise to many important questions, the most prominent of which grew out of the finances and the currency. At the succeeding session, Mr. Lowndes and Mr. Calhoun were placed at the head of the committees which had charge of these important subjects; Mr. Lowndes was made chairman of the Ways and Means, and Mr. Calhoun, from the prominence he had acquired at the preceding session on the Bank Question, was appointed chairman of that on currency. The most prominent question connected with the finances was that of the readjustment of the duties on the imposts. The duties had been doubled at the commencement of the war, and the question now presented was, how much they should be reduced. It was one that took in the whole range of the future policy of the government, and involved the consideration of many important subjects; the military and naval establishments, the debt, and the new direction given to a large amount of the capital and industry of the country in consequence of the war, the Embargo, the Non-importation, and Non-intercourse Acts, which preceded it. These, in turn, involved the question of our foreign relations in all their bearings. After a survey of the whole ground, the Committee of Ways and Means reported the bill, with the full concurrence of the administration, which passed with but few changes, and has since been called the Tariff of 1816.

Few measures have been less understood or more misrepresented. It has been the general impression that the duties were adjusted by the bill mainly in reference to the protection of manufactures. Such is far from being the fact. With the exception of a few items, such as the minimum duty on coarse cottons, the duties on rolled iron, and, perhaps, one or two more, the duties would have been arranged substantially as they were if there had not been a manufacturing establishment in the whole country. It was in other respects a revenue bill, proposed and reported by the committee to whom the subject of revenue properly belonged, and regulated in its details, with the few exceptions referred to, by revenue considerations.

The first great question in the adjusting of the duties was, what amount of revenue would the future policy of the country require? And, in deciding that, the leading question was, whether the public debt should be rapidly or slowly paid? In this decision were involved, not only the question of the policy of freeing the government as soon as possible from debt, but also the collateral effects of such a process on the country under the particular circumstances of the case. In that view, the effects which raising the duties, with a view to the speedy discharge of the debt, would have in sustaining the manufacturing establishments which had grown up under the war, and the restrictive system preceding it, served to create a strong motive for adopting that policy, and for fixing the duties as high as they stand in the act. In conformity with this policy, an efficient sinking fund of \$10,000,000 annually was provided for the payment of the principal and interest of the debt, with the proviso that all moneys remaining in the treasury at the end of each year exceeding \$2,000,000 should be carried to its aid. It was in reference to these views, and the necessity of providing for the military and naval establishments on a scale sufficiently extended for the public service, that the details of the bill and the rates of the duties were mainly adjusted, and not solely or principally for the protection of manufactures, as has been erroneously supposed. If proof is required, conclusive evidence will be found in the bill itself, which imposes a much lower average rate of duties on what are now called the protected articles, that is, articles similar to those made at home, or which may come into competition with them, than upon the other descriptions.

Nor has the course of Mr. Calhoun in reference to it been less misunderstood or misrepresented than the measure itself. He has frequently been called the author of the protective system. Nothing is more untrue. He was not on the committee, and took no part in the discussion, except to make a short off-hand speech at the request of a friend, at a particular stage of the debate. He was engrossed with the duties of his own committee, and had bestowed but little attention to the details of the bill. He concurred in the general views and policy in which it originated, and the more readily because it would sustain the manufacturing establishments that had grown up under the war-measures of the government. Shortly after he came into Congress, he had anticipated, as has been stated, the difficulty that would be occasioned by the new direction which so considerable a portion of the capital and labour of the country had taken; and, while he professed a disposition at the time to do what could be legitimately done to support them on the return of peace, yet he used his best efforts to diminish the necessity, as far as practicable, by removing every remnant of the restrictive system during the war. He did not then, nor do we believe that he has since doubted that, in deciding whether the debt should be more speedily or more tardily discharged, the favourable effects which the former mode would have in sustaining the manufacturing establishments was, under the circumstances of the case, a legitimate and proper consideration. But truth and candour require us to say, that, as far as the details of the bill went beyond, and raised the duties above the revenue point, with the view to protection, as on our coarse cottons and rolled iron, he has long believed it to be unconstitutional, unjust, and unwise. The subject was new, and his attention was drawn to other subjects, and he did not take the proper distinction between duties for revenue and for protection, nor was it, as it is believed, taken at the time by any one. He who will examine Mr. Calhoun's remarks on the occasion will not fail to perceive that the support he gave the bill looked, not to what has since been called the protective policy, but almost wholly to considerations of a public character connected with the foreign relations of the

country, and the danger resulting from war to a country, as ours was then, in a great measure, dependant on agriculture and commerce with foreign nations, without the requisite naval power to keep open in war the channels of trade with the rest of the world. In fact, it is difficult at this time, in the changed condition of the country and the world, to realize the circumstances under which the public men of that day acted, and the motives which guided them.

To do so, we must go back to the history of that period. A just and necessary war had been honourably terminated with the greatest power in the world, after a short but perilous struggle. The violent and unpatriotic course of the opposition during the war had so discredited it, that the name and doctrines of the Federal party, once so respectable, had become odious. After the war, they ceased to use their old name, or to avow their doctrines as a party; and the long struggle between them and their principles and policy, and the Republican party and their principles and policy, was supposed to have finally terminated in the ascendancy of the latter. The impression was almost universal, that the danger to our popular system of government from the Federal consolidation doctrines was ended. The only cause of danger to the country and its institutions was then supposed to be from abroad. The overthrow of Bonaparte was followed throughout Europe by a powerful reaction against the popular principles on which our government rests, and to which, through the influence of our example, the French Revolution was traced. To counteract their influence, and to put down effectually their revival in Europe, a league of all the great Continental monarchs was formed, called the Holy Alliance. Great Britain did not expressly accede to it, but countenanced and supported it. Our country of all the world stood alone in opposition, and became an object of the deepest jealousy. The Spanish provinces of South America, it is true, were in a revolutionary state, and struggling to form governments similar to ours. It was known that this formidable combination of crowned heads meditated hostile movements against them on political grounds, which could not be made without involving us. In such a state of the world, well might the patriots of that day be roused to the dangers from without, almost to the neglect of those from within. Had events taken the course which then seemed so probable, much that was then said and done, which now seems to require explanation, would have been regarded as profoundly wise. This is pre-eminently true of Mr. Calhoun's course. Always vigilant and solicitous for the safety and prosperity of the country, he kept his eyes steadily directed, at that critical period, to the point from which he and all then thought the country was menaced, and was active and zealous in giving such a direction to the policy of the government, for the time, as was best calculated to meet it. During this period, he spoke at large on the subject of defence against external danger, in a speech delivered on the subject of the repeal of the direct taxes, and which, for its eloquence, ability, and lofty and patriotic sentiments, gained him great applause. To the same cause may be traced his course, and that of the great body of the party at the time, on most of the subjects in reference to which different views are now entertained by them, and, among others, on that of internal improvements. On that subject, as well as upon the tariff, his views have been much misunderstood as well as misrepresented. Of these views a brief explanation may here be important.

During the war, while the coasting trade was interrupted, the whole internal commercial intercourse, and the military transportations and movements over our widely-extended country, had to pass through internal routes, then in a state far less perfect than at present, and the difficulties

were immense. Great delay, uncertainty, and expense attended the concentration of any considerable force or supply on a point where the defence of the country or an attack on the enemy made it necessary. This greatly enfeebled our military operations, and contributed much to exhaust the means of the government. So great were the expense and difficulties, that it is estimated, for example, that much of the flour delivered at Detroit during the war cost \$60 per barrel, and most of the cannon and ball transported to the lakes not less than 50 cents per pound.

At the commencement of the first session after the war, while the recollection of these things was fresh, Mr. Madison, in his opening message, among other things, invited the attention of Congress to the subject of internal improvements, and recommended Congress to call into exercise whatever constitutional power it might possess over the subject, and if that should not prove adequate, to apply for an amendment to the Constitution granting such additional powers as would be sufficient. Mr. Calhoun, acting, as he supposed, in strict conformity to this recommendation, reported a bill at the next session, to set apart and pledge the bonus of the United States Bank and their share of its dividends as a fund for internal improvement. It made no appropriation, nor did it intend to affirm that Congress had any power, much less to fix the limits of its power, over the subject; but to leave both, as well as the appropriations thereafter to be made, to abide the decision of Congress, in conformity with the President's views. Nor did Mr. C. undertake to establish either in his speech. He declined both, and confined his remarks to the general benefit of a good system of internal improvements. When urged to assert the power of Congress, he refused, saying that, although he believed it possessed the power to a certain extent, he was not prepared to say to what limits it extended. He had not the least suspicion, in reporting and supporting the bill, that he went beyond the President's recommendation, or that he would have any difficulty in approving it, till the bill had passed both Houses, and was sent to him for his signature.

It was Mr. Madison's last session, and only a few days before its termination, when the bill was sent to him; and while it was still before him, Mr. Calhoun called to take his leave of him. After congratulating him on the success of his administration, and expressing the happiness he felt in having had the opportunity of co-operating with him in its most difficult period, that of the war, he took his leave. When he reached the door, Mr. Madison requested him to return. He did so, and took his seat; and for the first time Mr. M. disclosed to him his constitutional objections to the bill. Mr. Calhoun expressed his deep regret, first, that he should entertain them, and, next, that he had not intimated them to him in time, saying that, if he had, he (Mr. Calhoun) would certainly not have subjected him to the unpleasant duty, at the very close of his administration, of vetoing a bill passed by the votes of his friends, nor himself to having the weight of his name and authority brought against him on such a subject. He then stated that he had introduced the bill, as he believed, in strict conformity to his recommendation, and if he had gone beyond, it was not intentional, and entreated him to reconsider the subject; but it was too late.

In this connexion, it is due to candour to state, that although Mr. Calhoun has never committed himself, in any speech or report, as to the extent of the constitutional powers of Congress over internal improvements, yet his impression, like that of most of the young men of the party at the time, was, that it was comprehended under the money-power of the government. Experience and reflection soon taught him this was an error—one, in all probability, originating with him, and others of his own age, in the precedent of the Cumberland Road, which may be regarded as the first

departure by the Republican party from the true construction of the Constitution in reference to that dangerous power. Thus much it has been thought proper to state by way of explanation, and as due to that portion of our political history, and the part which Mr. Calhoun acted in relation to it.

The subject of the currency, as has been stated, was particularly intrusted to Mr. Calhoun. It was regarded as the most difficult and important question of the session. All the banks of the states south of New-England had, at an early period of the war, stopped payment, and gold and silver had entirely disappeared, leaving within their limits no other currency than the notes of banks that either would not or could not redeem them. Government was forced to submit, and not only to collect its taxes and dues, and make its disbursements, and negotiate its loans in their discredited and depreciated paper, but also to use them, at the same time, as the agents of the treasury and depositories of its funds. At first the depreciation was inconsiderable, but it continued to increase, though unequally, in the different portions of the Union to the end of the war. It was then hoped it would stop; but the fact proved far otherwise; for the progress of depreciation became more rapid and unequal than ever. It was greatest at the centre (the District of Columbia and the adjacent region), where it had reached 20 per cent., as compared with Boston; nor was there the least prospect that it would terminate of itself. It became absolutely necessary, in this state of things, for the government to adopt the rule of collecting its taxes and dues in the local currency of the place, to prevent that which was most depreciated from flooding the whole Union; for the public debtors, if they had the option, would be sure to pay in the most depreciated. But the necessary effect of this was to turn the whole import trade of the country towards the Chesapeake Bay, the region where the depreciation was the greatest. By making entry there, the duties could be paid in the local depreciated currency, and the goods then shipped where they were wanted. The result of the rule, though unavoidable, was to act as a premium for depreciation. It was impossible to tolerate such a state of things. It was in direct hostility to the Constitution, which provides that "all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States," and that "no preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue to the ports of one state over another." Thus the only question was, What shall be done?

The administration was in favour of a bank, and the President (Mr. Madison) recommended one in his Message at the commencement of the session. The great body of the Republican party in Congress concurred in the views of the administration, but there were many of them who had, on constitutional grounds, insuperable objections to the measure. These, added to the Federal party, who had been against the war, and were, in consequence, against a bank, constituted a formidable opposition.

Mr. Calhoun, whose first lesson on the subject of banks, taken at the preceding session, was not calculated to incline him to such an institution, was averse, in the abstract, to the whole system; but perceiving then no other way of relieving government from its difficulties, he yielded to the opinion that a bank was indispensable. The separation of the government and the banks was at that time out of the question. A proposition of the kind would have been rejected on all sides. Nor was it possible then to collect the taxes and dues of the government in specie. It had been almost entirely expelled the country; there appeared to be no alternative but to yield to a state of things to which no radical remedy could at that time be applied, and to resort to a bank to mitigate the evils of a system which in its then state was intolerable. This, at least, was the

view which Mr. Calhoun took, and which he expressed in his speech on taking up the bill for discussion. It is said to have been one of the most elaborate and powerful he ever delivered. Unfortunately, it is lost. That published at the time is a meager sketch of what took three hours in the delivery, and such as it is, never passed under his review and correction, and omits almost entirely all that does not immediately refer to the bank.

The passage of the Bank Bill was followed by the joint resolution of 1816, which prohibited, after a certain day, the reception of the notes of any bank which did not pay specie. It received the decided support of Mr. Calhoun, and was the first step towards the separation of the government from the banking system. Through the joint agency of the two measures, the currency was brought to the specie standard, and the evil remedied.

During the same session a bill was passed changing the per diem pay of members of Congress into an annual compensation of \$1500. It proved to be exceedingly unpopular; so much so, that the greater part of the members who voted for it declined offering for re-election, and those who were again candidates, with few exceptions, were defeated at the polls. Mr. Calhoun voted for the bill, though he took but little part or interest in its passage. When he returned to his constituents, he found, for the first time, the tide of popular favour against him. So strong was the current, that his two predecessors, who had retired in his favour, General Butler and Colonel Calhoun, the latter a near relative, were both violently opposed to him, and the former came out as a candidate against him. They were both men of great influence, the one residing at Edgefield, the other in Abbeville, and these two formed the Congressional district. Only a few faithful friends ventured openly to vindicate his vote. He was advised to appeal to the kind feelings of his constituents, and apologize for his course. This he peremptorily declined, declaring that he had voted for the measure because he believed it was right, and could not, as his opinion remained unchanged, apologize for that which his judgment approved. He added, at the same time, that all he asked was, that his constituents should give him a hearing in explanation of his vote. A day was appointed in each of the districts for him to address them at the courthouses. He met and addressed them accordingly. In his two speeches he confined himself to the merits of the question, without apology or appeal to sympathy, but with such force, candour, and manliness, that the tide was completely turned, and he was triumphantly re-elected.

At the next session of Congress a bill was introduced to repeal the act. It gave rise to an animated and interesting debate, in which Mr. Calhoun took part, and entered fully into the merits of the measure, and the reasons which governed him in voting for it. An estimate may be formed of the ability of the speech from the following compliment bestowed upon it by Mr. Grosvenor, of New-York, one of the ablest and most distinguished members of the House, on the opposite side in politics. To understand the allusion which he made, and to appreciate the full force of the compliment, it is proper to premise that there had been a personal difference between him and Mr. Calhoun in one of the secret sessions during the war, since which they had not been on speaking terms. Mr. Grosvenor said, "He had heard, with peculiar satisfaction, the able, manly, and constitutional speech of the gentleman from South Carolina." [Here Mr. Grosvenor, recurring in his own mind to their personal difference with Mr. Calhoun, which arose out of the warm party discussions during the war, paused for a moment, and then proceeded]: "Mr. Speaker, I will not be restrained. No barrier shall exist which I will not leap over for the purpose of offering to that gentleman my thanks for the judicious, in-

dependent, and national course which he has pursued in this House for the last two years, and particularly upon the subject now before us. Let the honourable gentleman continue with the same manly independence, aloof from party views and local prejudices, to pursue the great interests of his country, and fulfil the high destiny for which it is manifest he was born. The buzz of popular applause may not cheer him on his way, but he will inevitably arrive at a high and happy elevation in the view of his country and the world."

He made another effort about the same time on the treaty-making power, of which William Pinckney, the distinguished advocate, at that time a member of the House from Maryland, and who followed in the debate, said, "The strong power of genius, from a higher region than that of argument, had thrown on the subject all the light with which it is the prerogative of genius to invest and illustrate everything;" and still more directly, "The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. Calhoun) has exhausted the correct constitutional grounds of the question, and left me nothing but to recapitulate his arguments."

After taking an active and influential part in all the great questions which grew out of the transition from a state of war to that of peace, both at this and the preceding session, he began to turn his attention towards correcting the abuses which existed in the administrative branches of the government, and more especially towards the disbursements, in which great looseness and profusion had prevailed during the war. He had ever been the advocate of rigid economy and accountability in the use of the public money, and had resolved thenceforward to devote himself to their enforcement while he remained in Congress. The first thing that he struck at was the dangerous power which had been given to the President, of transferring appropriations, at his discretion, from one branch of service to another, in the war and navy departments; thereby converting, in effect, specific into general appropriations, and subjecting them, in a great measure, to his control. The evil had become so inveterate that it could not all at once be extirpated. The chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, and the Secretary of the Treasury, both opposed the repeal of the act which authorized such transfers, but he nevertheless succeeded, against their opposition, in imposing important limitations on the power. This was among his last Congressional acts.

CHAPTER III.

Including the Period during his Administration of the War Department.

SHORTLY before the meeting of Congress at the next session, he received an invitation from Mr. Monroe to take a place in his cabinet as Secretary of War. It was unsolicited and unexpected. His friends, with some exceptions, advised against his acceptance, on the ground that Congress was the proper theatre for his talents; Mr. Lowndes concurred in this advice, and, among other reasons, urged that his improvement in speaking had been such that he was desirous to see the degree of eminence he would reach by practice. Indeed, the prevailing opinion at the time was, that his talent lay more in the power of thought than action. His great powers of analysis and generalization were calculated to make the impression, which was not uncommon at the time, that his mind was more metaphysical than practical, and that he would lose reputation in taking charge of a department, especially one in a state of such disorder

and confusion as the war department was then. The reasons assigned by his friends served but to confirm Mr. Calhoun in the opinion that he ought to accept. He believed the impression of his friends was erroneous as to the character of his mind; but if not, if his powers lay rather in thinking and speaking than in execution, it was but the more necessary he should exercise them in the latter, and thereby strengthen them where they were naturally the weakest. He also believed that he could render more service to the country in reforming the great disbur-sing department of government, admitted to be in a state of much disorder, than he could possibly do by continuing in Congress, where most of the great questions growing out of a return to a state of peace had been discussed and settled. Under the influence of these motives, he accepted the proffered appointment, and entered on the duties of the department early in December, 1817.

Thus, after six years of distinguished services in Congress, during which Mr. Calhoun bore a prominent and efficient part in originating and supporting all the measures necessary to carry the country through one of the most trying and difficult periods of its existence, and had displayed throughout great ability as a legislator and a speaker, we find him in a new scene, where his talents for business and administration for the first time are to be tried. He took possession of his department at the most unfavourable period. Congress was in session, when much of the time of the secretary is necessarily occupied in meeting the various calls for information from the two Houses, and attending to the personal application of the members on the business of their constituents. Mr. Graham, the chief clerk, an able and experienced officer, retired shortly afterward, and a new and totally inexperienced successor had to be appointed in his place. The department was almost literally without organization, and everything in a state of confusion. Mr. Calhoun had paid but little attention to military subjects in any of their various branches. He had never read a treatise on the subject, except a small volume on the Staff.

In this absence of information, he determined at once to do as little as possible at first, and to be a good listener and a close observer till he could form a just conception of the actual state of the department and what was necessary to be done. Acting on this prudent rule, he heard all and observed everything, and reflected on and digested all that he heard and saw. In less than three months he became so well acquainted with the state of the department, and what was required to be done, that he drew up himself, without consultation, the bill for organizing it on the bureau principle, and succeeded in getting it through Congress against a formidable opposition, who denounced it as wild and impracticable. But, on the contrary, this organization has been proved to be so perfect, that it has remained unchanged through all the vicissitudes and numerous changes of parties till this time, a period of twenty-five years.

But that was only the first step. The most perfect system is of little value without able and faithful officers to carry it into execution. The President, under his advice, selected to fill the several bureaus such officers as had the confidence of the army for ability and integrity, and possessing an aptitude of talent for the service of the bureau for which they were respectively selected. With each of these Mr. Calhoun associated a junior officer, having like qualifications, for his assistant. But, to give effect to the system, one thing was still wanting—a code of rules for the department and each of its bureaus, in order to give uniformity, consistency, efficacy, and stability to the whole. These he prepared, with the assistance of the heads of the respective bureaus, under the provision of the bill for the organization of the department, which gave the secretary

the power to establish rules not inconsistent with existing laws. They form a volume of considerable size, which, like the act itself, remains substantially the same, though, it is to be feared, too often neglected in practice by some of his successors. All this was completed in the course of a few months after the passage of the act, and the system put into active operation. It worked without a jar.

In a short time its fruits began to show themselves in the increased efficiency of the department and the correction of abuses, many of which were of long standing. To trace his acts through the period of more than seven years, during which Mr. Calhoun remained in the war-office, would be tedious, and occupy more space than the object of this sketch would justify. The results, which, after all, are the best tests of the system and the efficiency of an administration, must be taken as a substitute. Suffice it, then, to say, that when he came into office, he found it in a state of chaos, and left it, even in the opinion of opponents, in complete organization and order. An officer of high standing and a competent judge pronounced it the most perfectly organized and efficient military establishment for its size in the world. He found it with upward of \$40,000,000 of unsettled accounts, many of them of long standing, going back almost to the origin of the government, and he reduced them to less than three millions, which consisted, for the most part, of losses, and accounts that never can be settled. He prevented all current accumulation, by a prompt and rigid enforcement of accountability; so much so, that he was enabled to report to Congress in 1823, that "of the entire amount of money drawn from the treasury in 1822 for military service, including pensions amounting to \$4,571,961 94, although it passed through the hands of 291 disbursing officers, there has not been a single defalcation, nor the loss of a single cent to the government." He found the army proper, including the Military Academy, costing annually more than \$451 per man, including officers, professors, and cadets, and he left the cost less than \$287; or, to do more exact justice to his economy, he diminished such parts of the cost per man as were susceptible of reduction by an efficient administration, excluding pay and such parts as were fixed in moneyed compensation by law, from \$299 to \$150. All this was effected by wise reforms, and not by parsimony (for he was liberal, as many supposed, to a fault) in the quality and quantity of the supplies, and not by a fall of prices; for in making the calculation, allowance is made for the fall or rise of prices on every article of supply. The gross saving on the army was \$1,300,000 annually, in an expenditure which reached \$4,000,000 when he came into the department. This does not include the other branches of service, the ordnance, the engineer and Indian bureaus, in all of which a like rigid economy and accountability were introduced, with similar results in saving to the government.

These great improvements were made under adverse circumstances. Party excitement ran high during the period, and Mr. Calhoun came in for his full share of opposition and misrepresentation, which may be explained by the fact that his name had been presented as a candidate for the presidency. He was often thwarted in his views and defeated in his measures, and was made for years the subject of almost incessant attacks in Congress, against which he had to defend himself, but with such complete success, finally, as to silence his assailants. They had been kept constantly informed of every movement in his department susceptible of misconstruction or of being turned against him. One of the representatives, who boarded in the same house with his principal assailant, offered to disclose to Mr. Calhoun the channel through which his opponents in Congress derived the information on which they based their attacks. Mr.

Calhoun declined to receive it. He said he did not object that any act of the department should be known to his bitterest enemies: that he thought well of all about him, and did not desire to change his opinion; and all that he regretted was, that if there was any one near him who desired to communicate anything to any member, he did not ask for his permission, which he would freely have given. He felt conscious he was doing his duty, and dreaded no attack. In fact, he felt no wish that these attacks should be discontinued. He knew how difficult it was to reform long-standing and inveterate abuses, and he used the assaults on the department and the army as the means of reconciling the officers, who might be profiting by them, to the measures he had adopted for their correction, and to enlist them heartily in co-operating with him in their correction, as the most certain means of saving the establishment and themselves. To this cause, and to the strong sense of justice which he exhibited on all occasions, by the decided support he gave to all who did their duty, and his no less decided discharge of his duty against all who neglected or omitted it, is to be attributed the fact that he carried through so thorough a reform, where there was so much disorder and abuse, with a popularity constantly increasing with the army. Never did a secretary leave a department with more popularity or a greater degree of attachment and devotion on the part of those connected with it than he did.

In addition to the ordinary duties of the department, he made many and able reports on the subject of our Indian affairs, on the reduction of the army, on internal improvements, and others. He revived the Military Academy, which he found in a very disordered state, and left it in great perfection; he caused a minute and accurate survey to be made of the military frontier, inland and maritime, and projected, through an able board of engineers, a plan for their defence. In conformity with this plan, he commenced a system of fortification, and made great progress in its execution, and he established a cordon of military posts from the lakes around our northwestern and southwestern frontiers to the Gulf of Mexico.

Another measure remains to be noticed, which will be regarded in after-times as one of the most striking and useful, although it has heretofore attracted much less attention than it deserves. In organizing the medical department, Mr. Calhoun, with those enlarged views and devotion to science which have ever characterized him, directed the surgeons at all the military posts extending over our vast country, to report accurately to the surgeon-general at Washington every case of disease, its character, its treatment, and the result, and also to keep a minute register of the weather, the temperature, the moisture, and the winds, to be reported in like manner to the surgeon-general. To enable them to comply with the order, he directed the surgeons at the various posts to be furnished with thermometers, barometers, and hygrometers, and the surgeon-general from time to time to publish the result of their observations in condensed reports, which were continued during the time he remained in the war department. The result has been, a vast mass of valuable facts, connected with the diseases and the climate of our widely-extended country, collected through the long period of nearly a quarter of a century. They have been recently collected and published in two volumes by Dr. Samuel Forney, of the United States army. The one is entitled "Medical Statistics," and the other "The Climate of the United States," in which many interesting facts are disclosed relative to the diseases and climate of the different portions of our country. This example has been already followed by England, on a still more enlarged scale, and will doubtless be imitated by all civilized nations, and will in time lead to most interesting discoveries in the sciences of medicine and meteorology generally. The honour of taking the first

step in this important matter, and the discoveries to which it will lead, will, under the enlightened policy of Mr. Calhoun, belong to our country.

During the second term of Mr. Monroe's administration, the names of six candidates were presented to the people of the United States for the presidential office, Mr. Adams, Mr. Crawford, General Jackson, Mr. Clay, Mr. Lowndes, and Mr. Calhoun. The names of the two latter had been brought forward, the former by South Carolina, and the latter by Pennsylvania, and both nearly at the same time, without its being known to either that it was intended. They were warm and intimate friends, and had been so almost from their first acquaintance. They had both entered Congress at the same time, and had rarely ever differed in opinion on any political subject. Mr. Lowndes was a few years the oldest, and the first nominated. Mr. Calhoun's nomination followed almost immediately after. As soon as he heard of it, he called on Mr. L., and stated that it had been made without his knowledge or solicitation, and that he called to say that he hoped the position in which they had been placed by their friends towards each other would not affect their private and friendly relations. That he would regard it as a great misfortune should such be the effect, and was determined on his part to do everything to avoid it. Mr. Lowndes heartily reciprocated the same sentiment. It is unnecessary to state that they faithfully adhered to their resolution; and these two distinguished citizens of the same state, and nearly of the same age, set the noble and rare example of being placed by friends as rivals for the highest office in the gift of a great people, without permitting their mutual esteem and friendship to be impaired.

But, unfortunately for themselves, and, it may be said, for the country, the same harmony of feeling was not preserved between Mr. Calhoun and another of the candidates, Mr. Crawford. They had been long acquainted, and although residing in different states, they lived but a short distance apart, and had been long on friendly terms. It is difficult to trace the chain of causes by which they and their friends were brought into collision. Mr. Calhoun supported decidedly Mr. Monroe in his first election, when Mr. Crawford's name had been brought forward in opposition to him. He had acted as chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations, while Mr. Monroe was Secretary of State, during Mr. Madison's time, and had, from his frequent and intimate intercourse with him, formed a high estimate of his character for honesty, fidelity, and patriotism, to which, adding his sound judgment, long public service and experience, his age, and revolutionary claims, it was natural, without disparaging the high qualifications of Mr. Crawford, he should give him the preference. Mr. Crawford's friends relied on a Congressional caucus for a nomination, to which Mr. Calhoun was opposed, and against which he long stood out with the leading friends of Mr. Monroe in Congress. They finally assented reluctantly to go into one, to avoid a split in the party. Mr. Monroe was nominated by a small majority, when, in the opinion of his friends, the majority of the people was overwhelming in his favour. It is not extraordinary that he and many of his other friends, with this impression, should have been confirmed in their objections to a caucus nomination, as calculated to be influenced by improper considerations, and thus, instead of concentrating the will of the people, as it was originally intended to do, becoming capable of being made the instrument of defeating it, and of imposing on the country a President not of its choice.

When Mr. Crawford's friends brought forward his name the second time, they again relied on a caucus; while the friends of all the other candidates were in favour of leaving the election to a direct appeal to the sense of the people, as they all belonged to one party, and professed the

same political creed. With his decided impression against a caucus, strengthened, as has been stated, by what occurred at the first election of Mr. Monroe, it is not at all surprising that Mr. Calhoun's friends should take a prominent stand against another appeal to a Congressional caucus: that, together with the latent feelings on both sides (of which both were perhaps unconscious), growing out of the stand he made in favour of Mr. Monroe and against Mr. Crawford, probably led to the regretted division between their friends, which continued, as usual, long after the cause had ceased, with such mischievous influence on the politics of the country and the party to which both belonged.

Time and experience have decided against a Congressional caucus; but it must be admitted, looking back to the scenes of that day, that much might be said for and against it. It is certainly highly desirable that the people should act directly in voting for a President, uninfluenced by the address and management of powerful combinations of individuals acting through a small body, and who, in making a nomination, may respect their own interest and feelings much more than the voice of the people, or even the party they represent. But, on the other hand, without the intermediate agency of some such body in so large a country, and with so many prominent citizens from which to make a selection, the danger of discord in the ranks of the majority, and, through it, of the triumph of a minority in the election, is great. The chance is between discord with all its consequences, and the dictation of party leaders with all its effects. Each is pregnant with mischief. It is the weak point of the government, and unless it be guarded with the utmost vigilance, must end, on the one hand, in interminable confusion, or, on the other, in rendering the election by the people merely nominal. Without such vigilance, the real election would degenerate into the dictation of caucus. It was on this difficult point that the friends of these two distinguished citizens split, and it is left to time and experience yet to decide which were right.

In the progress of the canvass the talented and lamented Lowndes died, in the prime of life, and Mr. Calhoun's friends in Pennsylvania, with his acquiescence, withdrew his name, rather than subject the state to a violent contest between them and the friends of General Jackson. They had maintained throughout the canvass the most friendly relations, and were both decidedly opposed to the caucus. On his withdrawal, he was taken up by the friends both of General Jackson and Mr. Adams for the Vice-presidency.

This memorable canvass terminated in returning General Jackson, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Crawford to the House of Representatives, from which three, by the provisions of the Constitution, one was to be elected. The electoral votes received by each stood in the order in which their names are placed. Mr. Calhoun was elected by the people Vice-president by a large majority. The House, voting by states, on the first ballot elected Mr. Adams. Mr. Clay, who was then a member of the body, voted for him, against, as it was believed, the sense of a majority of his constituents. That impression, connected with his previous relations, personal and political, with Mr. Adams, caused much excitement, and a strong determination on the part of many to organize forthwith an opposition to the new administration. Mr. Calhoun discountenanced an immediate move, on the ground that, although, in his opinion, the vote belonged to the state, and should be given to the candidate the state would elect if left to its choice, yet he was not prepared to say whether there might not be circumstances under which a member might assume the high responsibility of voting otherwise, and, for the justification of his conduct, throw himself on the state; but he thought it indispensable that the member as-

suming it should make out a strong case, and that he would owe it to himself and the country to place his relations and conduct towards the administration of him whom he had elected above all suspicion. His advice induced his friends to wait the development of events; but when Mr. Clay afterward took office, and Mr. Adams adopted, in its full extent, Mr. Clay's American System, opposition to the administration from himself and his friends followed as a matter of course.

CHAPTER IV.

Including the Period during which he was Vice-president.

MR. CALHOUN took his seat in the Senate as Vice-president on the 4th of March, 1825, having remained in the war department a few months more than seven years. There never was a department left in more perfect order. It literally almost moved of itself. When he took charge of the department, it was difficult to discharge its duties with less than fourteen or fifteen hours of severe daily labour; but when he left it, the secretary had little to do beyond signing his name and deciding on such cases as were brought up by the subordinate officers, and were not embraced in the numerous and comprehensive rules provided for their government. He had not, indeed, been long in office before those who doubted his executive talents were disposed to place them even above his parliamentary, great as they were acknowledged to be. He united, in a remarkable degree, quickness with precision, firmness with patience and courtesy, and industry with the higher capacity for arrangement and organization; and to these he added exemption from favouritism, a high sense of justice and inflexible devotion to duty. Taken together, they formed a combination so fortunate, that General Bernard, who had been a favourite aid-de-camp of the Emperor Napoleon, and saw and knew much of him, and who was chief of the board of engineers while Mr. Calhoun was secretary, and had an equal opportunity of observing him, not unfrequently, it is said, compared his administrative talents to those of that extraordinary man.

The duties of the office of Vice-president, though it is one of high dignity, are limited, except giving a casting vote when the body is equally divided, to presiding in the Senate, which, in a body so small and courteous, and having so few and simple rules, affords but little opportunity for the display even of the peculiar talents necessary for Presidency in a deliberative body. The most eminent in filling such an office cannot leave much behind worth remembering. It is sufficient to say of him, that, as a presiding officer, he was impartial, prompt, methodical, and attentive to his duties. He always appeared and took his seat early in the session, and continued to preside till within a short time of its close; contrary to the practice of some of his immediate predecessors, who, by their long and frequent absence from their seat, had permitted the office to fall into some discredit. He was careful in preserving the dignity of the Senate, and raising its influence and weight in the action of the government. In putting questions, he changed the form of address from "Gentlemen" to the more simple and dignified address of "Senators," which has since been preserved, and adopted by the senators themselves in alluding to each other in debate. But the most important and memorable incident connected with the discharge of his duty as the presiding officer, and the most characteristic of the man, was the stand he took in favour of the rights of the body itself, and against his own power. He

decided, during a period of great excitement on the Panama Question, when party spirit ran high, and the debate was very warm and personal, that he had no right to call a senator to order *for words spoken in debate*. He rested his decision on the broad ground that, as the presiding officer, he had no power but to carry into effect the rules adopted by the body, either expressly or by usage, and that there was neither rule nor usage to authorize him to exercise the power in question. On the contrary, the rules of the Senate, by strong implication, limited the power of calling to order *for words spoken in debate* to the members themselves, to the exclusion of the presiding officer. And yet this decision, resting on so solid a foundation, subjected Mr. Calhoun to the fiercest attacks and the grossest abuse; and, what is more extraordinary, he was opposed by the members themselves, whose rights he maintained, with the exception of Mr. Macon, Mr. Tazewell, and a few others of the elder and more experienced, and his immediate personal friends. To understand how this should happen, it is necessary to advert to the existing state of the parties, and the circumstances under which the decision was made.

The circumstances under which Mr. Adams was elected, the part which Mr. Clay took in his election, and the prominent position to which he was appointed in his cabinet, laid the foundation of the opposition which finally overthrew his administration. This opposition was greatly strengthened by the bold Federal and consolidation doctrines avowed by Mr. Adams in his inaugural address, and by the wild measures of policy which he recommended. Among these was the project of sending commissioners to the Congress proposed to be convened at Panama of all the states that had grown up on the overthrow of the Spanish dominions on this Continent. This was a favourite measure of the administration. Mr. Calhoun was understood to be decidedly opposed to it, both on the ground of unconstitutionality and inexpediency; and it was on that question that the first attack was made on the administration. It commenced in the Senate; and, as he had not disguised his disapprobation, he was regarded in a great measure as the adviser and author of the attack, which, of course, subjected him to the fierce and united assaults of the administration and its friends. At the same time, the opposition in the Senate, though united against the administration, and its doctrines and policy, consisted of individuals who had but a short time before held political relations with men far from being friendly. They consisted of the friends of Mr. Crawford, General Jackson, Mr. Calhoun, and such portion of Mr. Clay's as disapproved of his connexion with Mr. Adams. With the exception of his own friends, and those of General Jackson, there was no indisposition, on the part of a large portion of the rest of the opposition, to see him sacrificed by the party in power. But as difficult and critical as was his position, it could not prevent him from a manly avowal of his opinion on a novel, and what he believed to be an important question, or from exposing himself to hazard when principle and duty required him to assert the rights of the body, though against his own power. But what added greatly to the excitement and abuse was the particular occasion upon which the decision was made. Mr. Randolph was then a member of the Senate, and gave full vent to his inimitably sarcastic power against the administration, and especially against the President and the Secretary of State, and their supporters in the body. It was too keenly felt by the last to permit them to do justice to the grounds on which Mr. Calhoun placed his decision, and the occasion was too favourable to be permitted to pass without a formal attack on him. A writer of great power (supposed to be the President himself) attacked his decision with much acrimony, under the signature of Patrick Henry. Finding it impossible

to assail the decision with effect, or through the rules of the Senate or its usage, he was forced to assume the position that the Vice-president, in virtue of his office, derived the power of calling a senator to order *for words spoken in debate*, not from the body itself, but directly from the Constitution, and that, in exercising the power, he was wholly independent of its will. This gave the whole subject a new and highly important aspect; for if it could be successfully maintained, it would give the Vice-president supreme control over the freedom of debate in the Senate. To this a reply followed (supposed to be from Mr. Calhoun), in two numbers, under the signature of Onslow, that so completely demolished the argument of Patrick Henry as to turn the tide in his favour. The Senate itself became so well satisfied of the injustice done him, that on the revisal of the rules a year or two afterward, they gave him the power in question, with an almost unanimous approval of his decision. It was thus, by his fairness under these trying circumstances, that he preserved a right of the body, which he might have usurped, not only with safety, but with increased popularity for the time; but of which the Senate could not be divested without a surrender of the freedom of debate, and the right of making their own rules, secured to them by the Constitution itself.

So vigorous was this first onset of the opposition, that the administration reeled under the force of the blow, and it became apparent that nothing but some bold step could save them from defeat, by the election of General Jackson, under whom the opposition, with the hearty concurrence of Mr. Calhoun and his friends, had unanimously rallied. The great strength of the administration lay in the various powerful interests rallied under the plausible name of Home Industry and the American System, of which the Secretary of State was the acknowledged head, and to which the President had given his adhesion. Their hope of holding power rested on a unanimous and zealous rally of that powerful combination in favour of the administration. The tariff was the great central interest, around which all the others revolved. The whole party, without schism, were united in its favour, while the opposition was greatly divided in reference to it; a great portion of the party, North and West, being in its favour, while the South and Southwest were united almost to a man against it. In fact, the portion of the Union at that time most attached to a high protective tariff was the Middle and Western States, and yet its union with the South and Southwestern portion was indispensable to the election of General Jackson. The advantage this state of things afforded was perceived by those in power, and was not permitted to remain without an attempt to turn it to account.

For that purpose, a general convention was called to meet at Harrisburg, the seat of government in Pennsylvania, and the friends of the tariff everywhere were invited to take into consideration the state of the manufacturing interest, and to devise measures for its farther promotion. The place was well chosen. Pennsylvania, though a thorough tariff state, was favourable to General Jackson's election, and its support was regarded as indispensable to his success. It met, and attempted to rally the whole interest by an elaborate report in favour of the protective system, accompanied by a scheme of high duties, to be presented to Congress at the next session for its action. It was thought, if the friends of General Jackson in the tariff states should oppose it, his defeat in those states would be certain; but if, on the contrary, they should support it, a schism between his Northern and Southern supporters would be equally certain, and with not less certainty would be followed by his defeat. But, as plausible as the calculation was, the tariff friends of General Jackson in New-York, Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, and the West, succeeded, as far as politics were concerned, in turning it against its projectors.

They succeeded in electing the speaker, and in obtaining the majority of the Committee of Manufactures in the House. Instead of adopting the Harrisburg scheme, this committee reported a thorough protective tariff, such as suited the states they represented, imposing duties even higher and more indiscriminately than those of the Harrisburg plan. They laid their duties without the slightest regard to the navigating and commercial interests of New-England, and so managed it as to induce the Southern members to resist all the amendments offered to render it acceptable to those who represented that interest, in the expectation of defeating the bill, either on its passage through the House or in the Senate, by the united votes of the members from those states and the South and Southwest. The expectation proved fallacious. The bill passed the House by a small majority, a large portion of the New-England members voting against it; but when it came to the Senate, where the relative united strength of the Southern and New-England States is much greater than in the House, it was ascertained that the bill could not pass unless it was modified so as to be acceptable to the senators from New-England favourable to the administration. It was so modified by the votes of the senators opposed to the administration from the Middle and Western States, contrary to the expectation of the South; for the bill, as modified, received the votes of the New-England senators in favour of the administration, which, added to those in favour of General Jackson from New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the Northwest, made a majority. It passed, accordingly, and became a law; but under such circumstances as not only to deprive the administration of the advantage they anticipated from the scheme, but to turn it directly against them.

Unfortunately, however, in this political manœuvring in the presidential contest, equity, justice, the Constitution, and the public welfare were overlooked. The interests of the great body of the consumers and of nine tenths of the producing interests, including especially the growers of the great agricultural staples, rice, cotton, and tobacco, with those engaged in commerce, ship-building, and navigation, and all their connected interests, were sacrificed to promote the prosperity of a single interest, and that constituting but a small portion of the community. But the evil ended not with their sacrifice, as immense as it was. As bad as was the effect in its pecuniary bearing, it was far worse in its financial, political, and moral operation. Never, in that respect, was a measure of the kind passed under more adverse circumstances. Viewed in its financial aspect, it was worse than folly—it was madness itself. The public debt was nearly extinguished, under the wise policy adopted after the war. After its final discharge, one half nearly of the annual revenue applied to the payment of its principal and interest would be liberated, which, if a wise and just policy had been adopted, would have enabled the government to reduce the duties one half, and still leave a sufficient revenue to provide amply for all the public wants. Instead of that, and in the face of these consequences, the duties were greatly increased, so much so as to be, on an average, nearly fifty per cent. on the value of the imports. This led to a corresponding increase of the revenue, which, in turn, hastened proportionally the final discharge of the debt, when, by necessity, one of three consequences must follow: a vast increase of expenditures; a sudden reduction of the duties, to the ruin of the manufacturers; or else an immense surplus in the treasury, with all its corrupting influence. These obvious results were either not seen or disregarded by those who were governed by cupidity, or too intensely engaged in the presidential contest to look to consequences.

It is regarded as necessary to understand the history of the origin and passage of that disastrous measure, in order to have a just conception of the events which have since occurred, and the motives which governed Mr. Calhoun's

course in reference to them. To it may be traced almost every important incident in our political history since that time, as far as our internal affairs are concerned. To it, too, may be ascribed the division in the Republican party, which separated Mr. Calhoun and the States' Rights portion from the other, and the disasters which have impaired the credit and standing of the country, and deranged and interrupted its currency, finances, commerce, and industrial operations. Mr. Calhoun, although not an actor at the time, was not an inattentive observer of what passed. His position as President of the Senate afforded great advantages for observation and reflection, of which he did not fail to avail himself from the time he first took his seat. Questions relating to the protective policy were constantly occurring in one form or another, and especially attracted his attention and excited reflection. He was not long in making himself master of that policy in all its bearings, economical and political, and in becoming thoroughly satisfied that it was unconstitutional, unjust, unequal, and oppressive in its character and tendency, and that it must, in the end, if it became the established and permanent policy, lead to the overthrow of our free and popular system of government. With this impression of the system, he watched with vigilance the progress of the tariff of 1828, from its incipient state at Harrisburg to the passage of the bill through the Senate. The results of his observation confirmed him in all his previous objections to the system, and strengthened his conviction of the dangers to which it exposed our institutions. For the first time he began to fear, from the part taken in the passage of the bill in the Senate by a considerable and influential portion of the party, that the leading object which he and his friends had in view in the presidential contest (a gradual and cautious reduction of the duties to the revenue standard preparatory to the discharge of the debt) might not be realized by a change of administration. He saw that the passage of the bill opposed great and almost insuperable difficulties to effecting what they desired; but neither he nor they permitted these misgivings to abate their zeal in support of General Jackson's election. They still hoped for the best from him; and how strongly Mr. C. desired his election, an occurrence at the time will best illustrate.

The Senate was so nearly equally divided at one time, that it was believed that the friends of the administration would intentionally so arrange it as to make a tie, and throw the casting vote on the Vice-president, in order to defeat General Jackson's election. His friends became alarmed, and some of them intimated a desire that Mr. Calhoun should leave his seat to avoid the effect, stating as an inducement that, in the event of a tie, the bill would be defeated without his vote. He promptly refused, and replied that no consideration could prevent him from remaining and doing his duty by voting against it; but added, it should not hurt General Jackson's election, for in that event his name should be withdrawn from the ticket as Vice-president. Such was the interest he took in his success, and so strong, and, at the same time, so patriotic, was his opposition to the bill of abominations; and yet many have been so unjust as to attribute his after opposition to the bill to disappointed ambition. On the contrary, he was ready to sacrifice every object of ambition, at a time when not a cloud darkened his prospects, to defeat a measure he believed to be so fraught with mischief. He was then the second officer in the government, and stood, without opposition, for re-election to the same place, on the ticket of General Jackson, whose success was then certain; nor was there any other man in the party of equal prominence and popularity, except the general himself. Nothing was wanting on his part but to accommodate himself to the course of events, without regard to their effects on the country, to have attained the highest office, which lay within a single step from the place where he then stood. This he could not but plainly see; but his resisting temptation on this occasion is but one instance of self-sacrifice among many in a long life, the whole course of which abundantly proves that office, even the highest, has ever been with him subordinate to his sense of duty and the public welfare.

The entire South was justly indignant at the passage of so unjust and oppressive a measure, especially under the circumstances which attended it, and the question universally asked was, What is to be done? On his return home this question was often and emphatically asked him. He was not the man to evade it. He frankly replied that there was no hope from Congress; that in both houses there were fixed majorities in favour of the system, and that there was no hope of any speedy change for the better; but, on the contrary, things must grow worse, if no efficient remedy should be applied. He said that he could see but two possible remedies within the limits of the Constitution; one, the election of General Jackson, who, by bringing to bear systematically and steadily the patronage which the protective system placed in his hands, might reduce the duties down to the revenue standard; and the other, State Interposition or Veto, the high remedy pointed out in the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions as the proper one, after all others had failed, against oppressive and dangerous acts of the general government, in palpable violation of the Constitution. He gave it as his opinion that there was no hope from the judiciary, and, as the act stood, the constitutional question could not be brought before the courts, the majority having refused to amend the title of the bill so as to make it appear on the face of it that the duties were laid for protection and not for revenue, expressly with the view of preventing the courts from taking jurisdiction, and deciding on its constitutionality. He also stated that, although he regarded General Jackson's election as certain, yet he was constrained to say that the circumstances under which the act passed, and the part which many of his influential supporters took in its passage, made it doubtful whether the hopes entertained from his election would, as it regarded the protective system, be realized, and expressed his belief that South Carolina would in the end be obliged to resort to its ultimate constitutional remedy by state interposition, and the ruinous consequences which must inevitably result from the act to itself, to the South, and finally to the whole Union.

Many of the leading citizens of the state visited Mr. Calhoun at his residence, near the mountains in South Carolina, during the summer and autumn after his return from Washington, with all of whom he conversed freely, and expressed the same sentiments. But while he stated his conviction of the necessity of preparing in time for the worst, he always advised that there should be no precipitation, nor anything done to endanger the election of General Jackson, nor, indeed, afterward, till it was ascertained whether his administration would correct the evil before the public debt was finally discharged. He fixed on that as the period for invoking the high authority of the state, as one of the sovereign parties to the constitutional compact, to arrest the evil, not only because he thought that ample time ought to be allowed to see if anything would be done, but because he believed that so long as the money, however unjustly and unconstitutionally extorted from the people by the act of '28, was applied to the payment of the debt, it should be borne. But he thought, if the operation of the act should not then be arrested promptly, the vast surplus revenue which it would afterward pour into the treasury would be converted into the means of perpetuating it, and fixing the system on the country permanently and beyond the reach of any constitutional remedy.

He was the more deeply impressed with the danger from what had already occurred. A leading advocate of the measure in the Senate, Mr. Dickerson, of New-Jersey, the chairman of the Committee on Manufactures, and since Secretary of the Navy, had already moved in anticipation of the payment of the debt, and with the view of strengthening the protective system, that five millions of dollars should annually be taken from the treasury and divided among the states. Such a proposition could not fail to arouse the attention and apprehension of one so sagacious and vigilant as Mr. Calhoun. He saw at once the full extent of the danger. No measure could be devised more insidious, cor-

rupting, or better calculated to effect the object contemplated. The money proposed to be so divided would never return to the pockets of the tax-paying people from whom it was first taken. It would go to the State Legislatures, to be disposed of as they should think proper, and would constitute a fund, in the management of which there would be no responsibility, under the control of the majority of the Legislature, or, rather, of the few leaders of the majority for the time, to be converted by them into means of power and emolument for themselves, through their partisans and friends. The necessary effect would be, that the leaders for the time in all the State Legislatures, even of those most injured by the system, would be interested in its favour; as they, and their friends and partisans, would derive more from the administration and application of the fund than they had contributed to it, as tax-payers, under the duties from which it was derived. Seeing these consequences, he could not doubt that, if the measure was once adopted, it would absorb in its vortex the whole surplus revenue after the discharge of the debt, and unite the General and State Governments in support of a universal system of plunder. Under that state of things, he believed the evil would become remediless, and our free and popular institutions would sink into a mass of corruption. With this impression, he used his utmost influence against this incipient move. It was defeated for the time, but not without deep apprehension, on his part, that it would revive and finally prevail, unless the protective policy, from which this monstrous measure derived its origin as a legitimate offspring, was effectually and forever destroyed. It was this view of the subject that so strongly impressed him with the necessity of decisive action, should the coming administration fail to put it down, and confirmed him in the belief that the time for action should by no means be delayed beyond the final discharge of the public debt.

So deep was his conviction of the danger, that when he was requested by one of the members elected to the Legislature of South Carolina, with whom he had conversed freely when on a visit to him, and who expected to be on the Committee of Federal Relations, to give him his views on the subject, he did not hesitate to draw them up in the shape of a report, in which he fully expressed himself as to the disease, the danger, and remedy; and, regardless of popularity, he gave him authority to state who was its author, should he think it would be of any service. The paper was reported by the committee with some, though not material alterations. Five thousand copies were ordered by the Legislature to be printed, under the title of "The South Carolina Exposition and Protest on the subject of the Tariff."

But while the Legislature were thus preparing to arrest, in the last resort, the obnoxious act, if it should become necessary, they showed, at the same time, their continued confidence in General Jackson. The presidential election came on at the same session, and the electors who were appointed by the Legislature gave their votes to General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun, who were elected by a large majority of the whole electoral college.

His inaugural address was received with enthusiasm by the people of the state, and strong hopes were entertained that their expectations upon his election would be fully realized, and the necessity of resorting to the ultimate remedy of the Constitution avoided; but his first message, at the commencement of the next session, went far to extinguish their hopes.

Here we reach a period of history of which it will be difficult to treat without reviving some recollection of the unfortunate difference which, for a time, divided the Republican party, now so happily united in the defence of their common principles and of constitutional liberty. But, referring to the past, as we shall for its facts, and not for its feelings, we shall endeavour to give so much of this history as is indispensable to an explanation of Mr. Calhoun's connexion with political affairs, as it will hereafter be written by some impartial hand—an effort which, we trust, may not be unacceptable to the great actors

of that day, if they should find it but a calm and dispassionate review of those trying and eventful scenes in which they bore so prominent a part. To suppose that any man would recoil from the truth of history is to attribute to him the meanest and most unmanly of fears—an injustice which no motives of false delicacy would make us even seem to offer to those whom we respect as friends. In discharging our duty as chroniclers, we shall not presume to decide upon the merits of past disputes, as our immediate object may be accomplished without entering upon that delicate ground. In stating the opinions and course of Mr. Calhoun, it is not always with a view of justifying them, and we may disapprove some features in the policy of President Jackson without doubting his motives, or disparaging his great abilities and eminent public services. Each of these great men is too deservedly proud of the past to wish to disguise or conceal any portion of that history upon which he rests his pretensions for fame; and the highest evidence of a noble nature is that candour which receives truth without offence whenever it is truthfully told. Now that the fires of old feuds have burned out, and the excitement of the time has passed away, we doubt not but that each will look upon the past without passion and with impartiality.

But to resume the thread of our narrative. The first message of the President, in December, 1829, did not remove the apprehensions which heretofore had weighed so heavily upon Mr. Calhoun's mind—apprehensions which then seemed the more exaggerated as he, perhaps, was the only man of the time who measured, in their full extent, the consequences of a system against which he was destined soon to peril his all in deadly strife. One of the paragraphs in this message declares that, "After the extinction of the public debt, it is not probable that any adjustment of the tariff, upon principles satisfactory to the people of the Union, will, until a remote period, if ever, leave the government without a considerable surplus in the treasury beyond what may be required for its current service." After discussing various modes of applying this surplus, the message thus again proceeds: "To avoid these evils, it appears to me that the most safe, just, and federal disposition which could be made of this surplus revenue would be its apportionment among the several states, according to their ratio of representation; and, should this measure not be found warranted by the Constitution, that it would be expedient to propose to the states an amendment authorizing it." These recommendations were not calculated to relieve the apprehensions of Mr. Calhoun as to the danger of a long continuance of the protective system and its union with distribution; a conjunction which, of all others, he regarded as the most formidable to the liberties of our people and the permanence of their free institutions; and, at the same time, they contributed to make a deep and lasting impression upon the people of South Carolina, and greatly increased their efforts to disseminate correct information as to the nature of the evil, and the absolute necessity of averting it by the separate action of the state, if not done by the General Government, all hope of which was now wellnigh gone. The next annual message recurred to the same topics. "In my first message," said President Jackson, "I stated it to be my opinion that 'it is not probable that any adjustment of the tariff, upon principles satisfactory to the people of the Union, will, until a remote period, if ever, leave the government without a considerable surplus in the treasury beyond what may be required for its current service.' I have had no cause to change that opinion, but much to confirm it." In another part of the same message he said, "Thus viewing the subject, I have heretofore felt it my duty to recommend the adoption of some plan for the distribution of the surplus funds, which may at any time remain in the treasury after the national debt shall have been paid, among the states, in proportion to the number of their representatives, to be applied by them to objects of internal improvement. Although this plan has met with favour in some portions of the Union, it has also elicited objections, which merit deliberate consideration." These he proceeded to state and answer at great

length. It soon became apparent that systematic movements were making in the leading tariff states to enforce this policy by the weight of their influence. The governors of New-York and Pennsylvania followed with similar recommendations, and their respective legislatures adopted strong resolutions in favour of the scheme. The door of hope from without seemed to be wellnigh closed. Unless the state should interpose to avert this system by her separate action, it appeared inevitable that the tariff of 1828, that "bill of abominations," would be perpetuated in connexion with a distribution of the surplus revenue after the payment of the debt, with all of its dangerous and corrupting consequences. South Carolina did not hesitate in her choice between these alternatives. Everywhere the subject of state remedies was agitated, and the elections throughout the state turned upon that deeply-exciting and important question.

In the mean time, the personal relations between Mr. Calhoun and the President had been impaired by various causes, and in the spring of 1830 the difference became serious and the rupture complete. Separated as they now were upon great public questions, and alienated also by private differences, it is not surprising that the President should have directed the whole weight of his immense popularity against Mr. Calhoun; nor had the latter any resource in the opposition, who, separated from him in principle and policy, bore down upon him with their whole strength and influence. These things, of themselves, seemed to constitute difficulties of sufficient magnitude to overpower him. On the whole expanse of the wide American Continent, there were, perhaps, but two spirits that could have encountered them; and these, strangely enough, were the two individuals who were destined to conduct the two parties in the tremendous contest that was approaching. But, undaunted at the prospect, and strong not only in the consciousness of his intellectual resources, but also in that high resolve which springs from a deep sense of wrong, Mr. Calhoun fearlessly assumed the responsibility of the movement in the great issue which South Carolina was preparing to make with the General Government; and, in obedience to the calls on him from various quarters, he unhesitatingly avowed his opinions on the complex and difficult questions arising out of it. It would be difficult to imagine a situation of more peril, or a greater example of self-abandonment and moral intrepidity. He and the state now stood alone in open, bold, and undaunted resistance against the scheme of a permanent distribution of the surplus revenue, sustained by a perpetual protective tariff. They were assailed with equal fierceness by the administration and opposition parties, and they were deserted by all the Southern states, though most of them had adopted the strongest resolutions, declaring the tariff of '28 to be oppressive, unjust, unequal, and unconstitutional, and pledging themselves in the most positive manner to oppose it. Nothing but the deepest conviction of the truth and justice of their cause, and of the magnitude of the questions, could have sustained him under such difficulties, and in the face of so imposing a force.

He commenced the address containing the avowal of his opinion with a statement of his views on the question of the relation which the states bear to the General Government. After referring to the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions, the Virginia report and the decision of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in the case of *Cobbett*, as containing a summary of his opinion, he said, "As many might not have an opportunity to refer to them, and as different opinions might be entertained as to their meaning, he would, to avoid all ambiguity, and that his sentiments might be fully known, state his opinions of the doctrine which he believed they embraced." With these preliminary remarks, he proceeded to give, in the first place, a concise summary of the doctrines they embraced, and in the next, his impression of the character and tendency of these doctrines, followed up by a calm, lucid, and able array of reasons in support of his opinion; and, finally, brought the whole to bear on the protective system, and the

dangers to which it exposed our political institutions. He then showed that the period of the final payment of the debt was fast approaching, and that, if the threatened danger was not promptly met, the most disastrous consequences would follow; and, finally, if the government itself should fail to meet it, state interposition was the only adequate and constitutional remedy which could arrest it. The following extract from this manly and able document contains the doctrines of state interposition or nullification, with his impression of its character and tendency:

"The great and leading principle is, that the General Government emanated from the people of the several states, forming distinct political communities, and acting in their separate and sovereign capacity, and not from all of the people forming one aggregate political community; that the Constitution of the United States is, in fact, a compact, to which each state is a party, in the character already described; and that the several states or parties have a right to judge of its infractions, and, in case of a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of power not delegated, they have the right, in the last resort, to use the language of the Virginia resolutions, '*to interpose for arresting the progress of the evil, and for maintaining, within their respective limits, the authorities, rights, and liberties appertaining to them.*' This right of interposition, thus solemnly asserted by the State of Virginia, be it called what it may, state-right, veto, nullification, or by any other name, I conceive to be the fundamental principle of our system, resting on facts historically as certain as our Revolution itself, and deductions as simple and demonstrative as that of any political or moral truth whatever; and I firmly believe that on its recognition depends the stability and safety of our political institutions.

"I am not ignorant that those opposed to the doctrine have always, now and formerly, regarded it in a very different light, as anarchical and revolutionary. Could I believe such in fact to be its tendency, to me it would be no recommendation. I yield to none, I trust, in a deep and sincere attachment to our political institutions, and the union of these states. I never breathed an opposite sentiment; but, on the contrary, I have ever considered them the great instrument of preserving our liberty, and promoting the happiness of ourselves and our posterity; and, next to these, I have ever held them most dear. Nearly half my life has passed in the service of the Union, and whatever public reputation I have acquired is indissolubly identified with it. To be too national has, indeed, been considered by many, even of my friends, to be my greatest political fault. With these strong feelings of attachment, I have examined, with the utmost care, the bearing of the doctrine in question; and so far from anarchical or revolutionary, I solemnly believe it to be the only solid foundation of our system and of the Union itself, and that the opposite doctrine, which denies to the states the right of protecting their several powers, and which would vest in the General Government (it matters not through what department) the right of determining, exclusively and finally, the powers delegated to it, is incompatible with the sovereignty of the states and of the Constitution itself, considered as the basis of a Federal Union. As strong as this language is, it is not stronger than that used by the illustrious Jefferson, who said, to give to the General Government the final and exclusive right to judge of its powers, is to make '*its discretion, and not the Constitution, the measure of its powers,*' and that '*in all cases of compact between parties having no common judge, each party has an equal right to judge for itself, as well of the infraction as of the mode and measure of redress.*' Language cannot be more explicit, nor can higher authority be adduced.

"That different opinions are entertained on this subject, I consider but as an additional evidence of the great diversity of the human intellect. Had not able, experienced, and patriotic individuals, for whom I have the highest respect, taken different views, I should have thought the right too clear to admit of doubt; but

I am taught by this, as well as by many similar instances, to treat with deference opinions differing from my own. The error may possibly be with me; but, if so, I can only say, that after the most mature and conscientious examination, I have not been able to detect it. But with all proper deference, I must think that theirs is the error who deny what seems to be an essential attribute of the conceded sovereignty of the states, and who attribute to the General Government a right utterly incompatible with what all acknowledge to be its limited and restricted character; an error originating principally, as I think, in not duly reflecting on the nature of our institutions, and on what constitutes the only rational object of all political constitutions."

The following are the three concluding paragraphs, which will exhibit the tone and feeling with which the address was written.

"In forming the opinions I have expressed, I have not been actuated by an unkind feeling to our manufacturing interest. I now am, and ever have been, decidedly friendly to them, though I cannot concur in all the measures which have been adopted to advance them. I believe considerations higher than any question of mere pecuniary interest forbid their use. But, subordinate to the higher views of policy, I regard the advancement of mechanical and chemical improvements in the arts with feelings little short of enthusiasm, not only as the prolific source of national and individual wealth, but as the great means of enlarging the domain of man over the material world, and thereby of laying the solid foundation of a highly-improved condition of society, morally and politically. I fear not that we shall extend our power too far over the great agents of nature; but, on the contrary, I consider such enlargement of our power as tending more certainly and powerfully to better the condition of our race, than any one of the many powerful causes now operating to that result. With these impressions, I not only rejoice at the general progress of the arts in the world, but on their advancement in our own country; and, as far as protection may be incidentally afforded in the fair and honest exercise of our constitutional powers, I think now, as I have always done, that sound policy, connected with the security, independence, and peace of the country, requires it should be; but we cannot go a single step beyond without jeopardizing our peace, our harmony, and our liberty—considerations of infinitely more importance to us than any measure of mere policy can possibly be.

"In thus placing my opinion before the public, I have not been actuated by the expectation of changing the public sentiment. Such a motive on a question so long agitated, and so beset with feelings of prejudice and interest, would argue, on my part, an insufferable vanity, and a profound ignorance of the human heart. To avoid, as far as possible, the imputation of either, I have confined my statement on the many and important points on which I have been compelled to touch, to a simple declaration of my opinion, without advancing any other reasons to sustain them than what appeared to me to be indispensable to the full understanding of my views; and if they should, on any point, be thought to be not clearly and explicitly developed, it will, I trust, be attributed to my solicitude to avoid the imputations to which I have alluded, and not from any desire to disguise my sentiments, nor the want of arguments and illustrations to maintain positions which so abound in both, that it would require a volume to do them anything like justice. I can only hope that truths which I feel assured are essentially connected with all we ought to hold most dear, may not be weakened in the public estimation by the imperfect manner in which I have been, by the object in view, compelled to present them.

"With every caution on my part, I dare not hope, in taking the step I have, to escape the imputation of improper motives, though I have, without reserve, freely expressed my opinions, not regarding whether they might or might not be popular. I have no reason to believe that they are such as will conciliate public favour, but the opposite, which I greatly regret, as I have ever placed a

high estimate on the good opinion of my fellow-citizens. But, be that as it may, I shall, at least, be sustained by feelings of conscious rectitude. I have formed my opinions after the most careful and deliberate examinations, with all the aids which my reason and experience could furnish; I have expressed these honestly and fearlessly, regardless of their effects personally, which, however interesting to me individually, are of too little importance to be taken into the estimate, where the liberty and happiness of our country are so vitally involved."

He followed up, the next year, this statement of his opinion by a letter* addressed to General Hamilton, then governor of the state, at his request, in which he went into the same subjects more fully, and with additional force of argument and illustration. They both did much to enlighten the state on the subject discussed, and to sustain her in the arduous struggle into which she was preparing to enter.

In the mean time, the period selected for final and decisive action was rapidly approaching, and the excitement in the state became deeper and deeper. A strong party, under able leaders, had risen in the state against the course proposed to be taken. They admitted the tariff to be unconstitutional and oppressive, but disagreed as to the remedy, which they regarded as revolutionary, and not warranted by the Constitution. They assumed the popular name of the Union party. The whole weight of the General Government was thrown in their favour. The two parties were drawn up in fierce array against each other, and every nerve was strained on each side to gain the ascendancy. The whole energy and talents of the state were aroused, and the people were incessantly addressed on both sides, through speeches, pamphlets, and newspapers, by the ablest men, in manly and eloquent arguments, making direct appeal to their understandings and patriotism, on all the questions involved in the issue.

At this stage, a gleam of light inspired the hope that the necessity of resorting to the extreme remedy of the Constitution would be unnecessary. President Jackson, in his message to Congress at the opening of the session in December, 1831, omitting for the first time all allusion to the scheme of distribution, announced the near approach of the period when the public debt would be finally paid, and recommended that provision should be made for the reduction of the duties and the relief of the people from unnecessary taxation, after the extinguishment of the debt. The message diffused general joy throughout the state. It was believed that the scheme of distribution was abandoned, and was hoped, late as it was, that most of the mischief anticipated from the surplus revenue, by a prompt and judicious reduction of the duties, might be still avoided. The delegation in Congress prepared to co-operate zealously with the friends of the administration in making such a reduction as would relieve the people from unnecessary taxation, and save the country and government from the worst of all evils, an accumulating and corrupting surplus, collected in bank notes, or, what was the same thing, bank credit.

But this gleam of sunshine proved transient and illusory. It soon became apparent that neither side, administration or opposition, contemplated anything like an adequate reduction. In spite of every effort made by the delegation, and after spending the greater portion of the session on the subject, an inconsiderable reduction of some three or four millions of dollars only was effected. This still left a revenue more than twice as large as the usual and necessary expenditure of the government would require after the payment of the debt, and the duties at high protective rates, on what were called the protected articles; and as if, too, to extinguish all hope, this trifling reduction was announced by Mr. Clay on the part of the opposition, and the Secretary of the Treasury on that of the administration, as the final adjustment of the tariff, and the permanent system of revenue, after the payment of the debt. In a striking particular, the act making the reduction was even more unequal and worse than the tariff of '28.

* See "Speeches," &c., No. 4.

It exempted the manufacturing portion of the community almost literally from all taxes. It gave them a bounty on all they made by imposing duties on all similar articles imported, and all such as could come in competition with what they made, while it exempted them, as consumers, from paying taxes on almost all others, by admitting them duty free; so that, instead of abandoning the principle of protection, or guarding against the danger of a surplus, the act but perpetuated the protective policy, and left the country and the government exposed to all the evils of a large annual surplus.

Such an arrangement could not induce South Carolina to surrender the stand she had taken. On the contrary, it only aroused her to more active resistance, and energetic preparation to meet an issue, which now seemed almost inevitable. At this stage an incident occurred that tended greatly to confirm and animate her in her course.

From the commencement, the State Rights party had claimed the authority of the Virginia Resolutions, Mr. Madison's Report, and the Kentucky Resolutions, which they attributed to Mr. Jefferson, as sanctioning the doctrine of nullification and the course they proposed to take, while those who opposed denied that they authorized the interpretation put on them, or that Mr. Jefferson was the author of the Kentucky Resolutions. It became a point of great importance to establish which of the two were right. Both sides admitted the high authority of Mr. Jefferson, and that the report and resolutions contained the true political creed of the party. Mr. Ritchie, the experienced editor of the *Enquirer* and the associate of Mr. Jefferson, and most of the distinguished men who were his contemporaries in Virginia, was among the most influential of those who denied that these documents, or the opinions of Mr. Jefferson, authorized the doctrine of nullification. But, fortunately, the original manuscript of Mr. Jefferson, from which the Kentucky Resolutions were taken, was brought to light at this critical juncture, and left no doubt that Mr. Jefferson was their real author, and that he entertained the doctrines of nullification to the full extent, as interpreted by the State Rights party, which Mr. Ritchie had the candour to acknowledge, as the following extract from the *Enquirer* of March, 1832, shows.

From the *Richmond Enquirer*, March 13th.

MR. JEFFERSON THE AUTHOR OF THE KENTUCKY RESOLUTIONS.

“*Nullification—An Error corrected.*—We come before the public to correct an error into which we have betrayed them. Some of the politicians of South Carolina had maintained the opinion, that Mr. Jefferson was not only the friend, but the father of nullification; and their principal argument was, that he was the author of the Kentucky Resolutions of 1799, as well as those of 1798; and that in those of 1799 is to be found the memorable passage, ‘The several states which formed that instrument, being sovereign and independent, have the unquestionable right to judge of its infraction; and that a nullification by these sovereignties of all unauthorized acts, done under colour of that instrument, is the rightful remedy.’”

“We had a great curiosity to ascertain the truth of this opinion. We hunted up all the facts that were within our reach, weighed them as impartially as we could, and we arrived at a different conclusion from that of the State Rights politicians of South Carolina. We expressed our opinions in the ‘*Enquirer*’ of the 13th of September last.

“We have now to state our conviction *that we were wrong, and the South Carolinians were right as to Mr. Jefferson's opinions.* A small MS. book has been found among his papers, which, with other articles, contains two copies, in his own handwriting, that appear to have been the original of the Kentucky Resolutions. The first of these is blurred and much corrected, with passages struck out and others interlined. The other is a fair and later copy, judging from the

colour of the paper and of the ink, of Mr. J.'s draught. We are indebted to his grandson for the permission to examine these MSS., and compare them with the printed copies of the Kentucky Resolutions, and for the opportunity of correcting our own mistake, and of laying the following result before our readers."

Here follows Mr. Jefferson's original draught of the Kentucky Resolutions.

Never was a document more clear and explicit on any point than this in favour of the principles on which Carolina had placed her right to interpose. Words could not make it more so. It says expressly, "That in all cases of an abuse of delegated powers, the members of the General Government being chosen by the people, a change by the people would be the constitutional remedy; but *where powers are assumed which have not been delegated*, a NULLIFICATION of the act is the RIGHTFUL REMEDY that every state has a natural right to, in cases not in the compact (*casus non fæderis*), to nullify, of their own authority, all assumptions of powers within their limits; that without this right, they would be under the absolute and unlimited dominion of whoever might exercise this right of judgment for them; that, nevertheless, this Commonwealth (Kentucky), from motives of regard and respect for its co-states, has wished to communicate with them on the subject; that with them alone it proposes to communicate, they alone being parties to the compact, and solely authorized to judge, in the last resort, of the powers exercised under it—Congress being not a party, but merely the creature of the compact, and subject, as to its assumption of its powers, to the final judgment of those by whom, and for whose use, itself and its powers were created."

So fully does the above extract, and the whole draught, in fact, accord with the views taken by Mr. Calhoun in the statement of his opinion, and letter to General Hamilton, that, had it been possible for him to have had access to the manuscript, he might well have been suspected of plagiarism.

Supported by this high and explicit authority, the State Rights party moved forward with renovated energy and confidence in preparing for the great issue; but the difficulties were great. The Union party, thoroughly organized under able leaders, and animated by the greatest zeal, were supported not only by the whole influence of the General Government, but sustained and cheered by the concurring voice of both parties, and, it may almost be literally said, of the whole Union. Against this immense resistance, the State Rights party had to obtain a majority of two thirds of both houses of the Legislature to carry out its views, as, according to their opinion, the right of a state to declare an act of Congress unconstitutional, and therefore null and void, is derived from the fact that the Constitution is a compact to which the people of the states, in their sovereign capacity, are direct parties; and, of course, the right appertains to them in this capacity only, and can only be exercised by them, through a convention, in the same mode that the instrument was adopted, and not by the State Government. They regard the General and State Governments as co-ordinate governments, and the people of the states, severally, as the paramount sovereign authority. According to these views, in order to take the final step it would be necessary to call a convention of the people of the state; and for this purpose, by a provision of the Constitution of the state, two thirds of the Legislature were necessary; without that nothing could be done, and the cause would have to be abandoned. The election was pending, and the great struggle between the parties was, on one side, to carry two thirds of both houses, and on the other to defeat it. The magnitude of the issue was felt by both, and never was a political struggle more ardent; and, let it be added for the honour of both parties and the state, never before, in such a struggle, was the appeal more direct and solemn to the intelligence and patriotism of the people, and so free from all false issues, cant, or appeal to passion or prejudice.

It resulted in the triumph of the State Rights party. They returned more than the constitutional number to both houses. The Legislature met and called

a Convention, which assembled and passed the Ordinance of Nullification, the 24th of November, 1832, accompanied by two addresses; one to the people of South Carolina, and the other to the people of their co-states of the Union, setting forth fully an explanation of the motives and principles which governed them as one of the parties to the constitutional compact, in the high and solemn act of sovereignty, which duty to themselves and to the Union compelled them to perform. They adjourned to meet in March, subsequent to the period at which, by the Constitution, the approaching session of Congress would terminate.

Congress met at the usual period, in December, and the President, in his Message, announced the final payment of the public debt, and recommended a reduction of the duties to the standard required for the revenue of the government economically and efficiently administered, to take place as soon as the faith of the government, and the preservation of the large capital invested in manufacturing establishments, would permit.

The time of Governor Hamilton having expired, General Hayne, then a senator in Congress, was elected his successor, and placed at the head of the government of the state at this momentous period. The proceedings of the Convention were reported to the Legislature, which met shortly after its adjournment, and an act introduced and passed to carry into effect the ordinance, to go into operation in February. That was followed by the proclamation of the President, which asserted that the ordinance was subversive of the Constitution, and that the object of South Carolina was the destruction of the Union; and after giving his views of the Constitution, and the provisions of the existing laws applicable to the case, and declaring the course he would pursue, he warned all the people of the state against obedience to the ordinance, under the high penalty for treason against the United States. Governor Hayne issued his counter proclamation, repelling the charges of the President, and maintaining the grounds taken by the Convention, and replying to the reasons assigned for the grounds taken in the President's proclamation.

CHAPTER V.

Including the Period from his Resignation of the Vice-presidency till the Admission of Michigan into the Union.

At this critical juncture, the Legislature elected Mr. Calhoun to fill the vacancy in the Senate occasioned by the election of General Hayne as governor. As trying as was the situation under such circumstances, he resigned without hesitation his place as Vice-president, and proceeded to Washington to take his seat in the Senate. Never was there, since the commencement of the government, a moment of more intense interest and anxiety throughout the whole Union, and never before was any public man placed in a situation more difficult and responsible. The expectation was general that he would be arrested as soon as he arrived in Washington; and on his way thither, wherever he stopped, crowds collected to see him. Nor was the excitement less when he arrived at the seat of government, where he had been so long and familiarly known. When he appeared in the Senate to take his seat as a member in a body over which he had so long and recently presided, the gallery and chamber were thronged with spectators. He repeated the constitutional oath in a firm and audible voice, and took his seat on the side and in the midst of his old political friends, of whom a large majority were now placed in hostile array to him. But as trying and responsible as was the occasion, he stood erect and unappalled, conscious of the purity of his motives, and strong in the depth of his conviction of the truth, justice, constitutionality, and magnitude of the question

which South Carolina, in her confidence, had selected him as her chosen representative to defend.

Mr. Calhoun, a few days after he took his seat, in order to bring the whole subject under the early consideration of the Senate, offered a resolution, calling upon the President to lay before the body the ordinance and other documents connected with it, which had been transmitted to him by the executive of the state; but he forbore to press its adoption, on the statement of Mr. Grundy, that there was reason to believe the President was preparing a message on the subject, which would be accompanied by the documents requested, and that the message would probably be sent the day after the next. Not expecting anything of importance the next day, Mr. Calhoun delayed some time after the usual meeting of the body to take his seat. When he entered the chamber, he was surprised to find it crowded, and the Secretary of the Senate in the midst of reading the message, which he did not expect until the next day. It took strong ground against South Carolina, and recommended the adoption of the most decisive measures to coerce her obedience.

It was a trying moment. He had not the slightest anticipation that he would be called on to say anything when he entered the chamber, and was wholly unprepared; and, to add to his embarrassment, he had, for the long period of fifteen years (while he filled the war department and the place of Vice-president), been entirely out of the habit of public speaking. Nor could he avoid speaking, as it would look like shrinking not to give an immediate reply to the message. Under all these trying circumstances, he rose as soon as the reading was over, and replied, in a manly and effective speech, to the ground taken in the message. After he concluded, the message and documents were referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, of which Mr. Grundy was chairman and Mr. Webster a prominent member. They reported a bill, extending the jurisdiction of the courts of the United States greatly and beyond all former acts, and clothing the President with almost unlimited powers, both as to men and money.

In order to have a preliminary discussion, and to take the sense of the Senate on the principles involved in the issue, before the bill was called up, Mr. Calhoun prepared and moved the three following resolutions, which affirmed the grounds on which South Carolina placed her right, on the one side, and negatived, on the other, those assumed in the proclamation and message.

“Resolved, That the people of the several states composing these United States are united as parties to a constitutional compact, to which the people of each state acceded as a separate and sovereign community, each binding itself, by its own particular ratification; and that the Union, of which the said compact is the bond, is a Union *between the states* ratifying the same.

“Resolved, That the people of the several states, thus united by a constitutional compact, in forming that instrument, in creating a General Government to carry into effect the objects for which it was formed, delegated to that government, for that purpose, certain definite powers, to be exercised jointly, reserving, at the same time, each state to itself, the residuary mass of powers, to be exercised by its own separate government; and that, whenever the General Government assumes the exercise of powers not delegated by the compact, its acts are unauthorized, void, and of no effect; and that the said government is not made the final judge of the powers delegated to it, since that would make its discretion, and not the Constitution, the measure of its powers; but that, as in all other cases of compact among sovereign parties, without any common judge, each has an equal right to judge for itself, as well of the infraction as of the mode and measure of redress.

“Resolved, That the assertions, that the people of these United States, taken collectively as individuals, are now, or ever have been, united on the principle of the social compact, and, as such, are now formed into one nation or people, or that they have ever been so united in any one stage of their political exist-

ence; or that the people of the several states comprising the Union have not, as members thereof, retained their sovereignty; or that the allegiance of their citizens has been transferred to the General Government; or that they have parted with the right of punishing treason through their respective state governments; or that they have not the right of judging, in the last resort, as to the extent of the powers reserved, and, of consequence, of those delegated, are not only without foundation in truth, but are contrary to the most certain and plain historical facts, and the clearest deductions of reason; and that all exercise of power on the part of the General Government, or any of its departments, deriving authority from such erroneous assumptions, must of necessity be unconstitutional; must tend directly and inevitably to subvert the sovereignty of the states, to destroy the federal character of the Union, and to rear on its ruins a consolidated government, without constitutional check or limitation, and which must necessarily terminate in the loss of liberty itself."

It is obvious, on the perusal, that if the principles offered by the resolutions be true, South Carolina would stand justified; and if those negatived be false, the bill could not be rightfully sustained; and such being the case, it was but fair that the principles should be settled prior to the discussion and action on the bill. But as reasonable as was the request of Mr. Calhoun, the Senate, under the influence of the committee, laid his resolutions on the table, and took up the bill for discussion. The debate was very able on both sides. Many of the old and sound Republicans, refusing to yield their long-cherished principles to party feelings or considerations, opposed the bill with great ability and vigour. Mr. Grundy, as chairman, claimed the right of closing the debate, and Mr. Calhoun reserved himself to reply to Mr. Webster, who was the great champion of the bill; but he was informed, through one of Mr. Webster's friends, that he would not speak before him. This left him no option, as he could not avoid speaking, and had therefore to submit. He spoke late,* and conjecturing that Mr. Webster intended to speak to the principles involved, and not to the provisions of the bill, he spoke at large on a variety of points, which he thought required explanation in connexion with the course of South Carolina, and but slightly touched on the principles which he had affirmed or negatived in his resolutions, in order to deprive Mr. Webster of the advantages he aimed at in reserving himself for the reply. He was right in his conjecture. The moment he sat down, Mr. Webster rose to reply, but spoke, as he anticipated, not on the bill, but to the resolutions, without assailing or controverting any of the positions taken by Mr. C. in his speech. This gave him a claim to be heard on his resolutions; and the Senate accordingly permitted him to call them up, and assigned a day in order to give him an opportunity of replying to Mr. Webster in their support.

When the day came the senate-chamber and gallery were crowded, and Mr. Calhoun replied in a speech† which, for precision and force of argument, has rarely, if ever, been equalled. The great point at issue was, whether the Constitution is or is not a compact between the States. Mr. Webster, with that strength of understanding which belongs to him, saw clearly where the real issue lay, and had the fairness and candour to concede that if, in fact, the Constitution is a compact between the States, then the doctrines contended for by South Carolina necessarily followed, nullification, secession, and all. Mr. Calhoun, accordingly, mainly directed his efforts to establishing the fact, and with such success, that even the North American Quarterly Review, published in Boston, and at all times the champion of the principles supported by Mr. Webster, in an article reviewing the debate, admitted that Mr. Calhoun had successfully maintained his ground on that point. Mr. Randolph, then in a feeble state of health, on his way to Philadelphia, was present in the senate-chamber, it is believed for the last time, when Mr. Calhoun spoke. He sat near the desk

* See "Speeches," &c., No. 5.

† See "Speeches," &c., No. 6.

where Mr. C. stood while addressing the Senate, and at the close openly and highly complimented him for the ability and success of his reply, which he regarded as unanswerable.

The bill passed, but while it was in progress, efforts were made in both Houses so to modify the duties as to terminate the controversy peaceably. Upon faith in these efforts, South Carolina postponed the time for carrying into effect her ordinance, from the first of February till after the adjournment of Congress on the fourth of March. Mr. Verplanck, in the early part of the session, had reported a bill in conformity with the message of the President at the opening of the session, proposing a very great reduction of the duties, but without surrendering the principle of protection, or, in many instances, reducing the duties to the revenue standard. Its progress was slow. It was detained a long time in committee of the whole, where many amendments, increasing the duties, were made. After it was reported to the House, it continued to drag along with difficulty. Many of the objectionable amendments made in the committee of the whole were concurred in, and the fate of the bill still continued doubtful, notwithstanding the steady and united support which it received from the State Rights party, objectionable as it was in many particulars. Their support was more than counterbalanced by the division in the ranks of the administration party.

In the mean time, Mr. Clay introduced a bill in the Senate, which received the sanction of that body, and was sent to the House, where Mr. Verplanck's bill still lingered near the end of the session. It was moved as a substitute to his bill, and carried by a large majority; Mr. Verplanck himself, and the leading friends of the administration who supported his bill, voting for it in despair, as it is believed, of the passage of his own. It received the sanction of the President, and has since been called the *Compromise Act*; and thus terminated this controversy, the most agitating and memorable that ever occurred under the government.

It is not deemed necessary to go into the origin or history of the act, or minutely into its provisions. The former have been given several times by Mr. Clay and Mr. Calhoun in their places in the Senate, and are generally known. It is sufficient to say that Mr. Calhoun, from the commencement, refused to go into any arrangement which did not explicitly surrender the principle of protection, but was willing to allow ample time for the gradual reduction of the duties on the protected articles, in order to save the manufacturers from ruin; but he insisted on a total repeal at once on all unprotected articles, in order to prevent, if possible, the great object of his dread from the first, a surplus revenue. Mr. Clay was, of course, on his part, solicitous, in making the changes necessary to a compromise, to give as slight a shock as possible to his long-cherished system. The result was the surrender of the protective principle and the establishment of the *ad valorem*, and a gradual reduction of duties on all protected articles, to terminate on the thirtieth of June, 1842, when no duty above 20 per cent, *ad valorem* should be laid; the immediate repeal of all duties on articles not similar to those manufactured in the country, and a moderate list of articles to be made permanently free of duty after the thirtieth of June, 1842, with provisions for cash duties and home valuation. Such are the general outlines of the provisions of the act which peaceably closed the controversy; and if faith and pledges had been observed with as much fidelity on the side of the tariff interest as it has been on the part of the opposite side, the possibility of its renewal would have forever been prevented.

Whatever opinion may have been entertained at one time of the views and motives of Mr. Calhoun, and the small but gallant party with which he acted, none now, not even the most prejudiced, doubts the purity and patriotism of his and their motives, however much they may differ from them as to principles and policy. So far from hostility to the Union, one of the leading objects was its

preservation. The Union may be destroyed as well by *consolidation* as by *dissolution*—by the centripetal as well as the centrifugal tendency of the bodies of which it is composed. It is the duty of the patriot to resist both, and hold the government firmly to its allotted sphere. Against the former, state interposition is an all-sufficient remedy, and it remains to be seen whether experience will not prove that it is an indispensable one. It was, at least, so considered by the State of South Carolina, and that was one of the principal motives for resorting to it. Nor does it admit of a doubt but that her action did much to counteract the consolidating tendency of the Government. Had she not taken the stand she did, in all probability the distribution of the surplus revenue among the states and the protective policy would have become the established system of the Government. The scheme of distribution is almost a necessary consequence of that policy. They are most intimately connected, as the experience of the last few years shows, even with an empty treasury. With one full to overflowing, as was the case when the debt was paid and the state interposed, it was almost, if not altogether unavoidable, without state interposition. That the protective tariff would not have been overthrown without it, the inconsiderable reduction of 1832, and the fate of Mr. Verplanck's bill, notwithstanding all the pressing circumstances under which it was introduced and attempted to be passed, conclusively prove; and that it could not have been overthrown if the two, distribution and protection, had become united, may be fairly inferred. They would then have been beyond the reach of all ordinary and constitutional remedies, when either consolidation or despotism would have been the end of our political system.

But how different now is the situation of the government and the country in consequence of the course pursued. When the state first took its stand, the very existence of states' rights was almost forgotten in the Union. The party had greatly departed from the old standard of its faith both in theory and practice, and had imperceptibly embraced, to a great extent, the doctrines and policy of its opponents. If proof be required, the proclamation, the message recommending the Force Bill, the bill itself, and the arguments by which it was supported, afford conclusive evidence. That a great and cheering change has since taken place, all must admit; and that it may be attributed, in a great measure, to say the least, to the stand taken by South Carolina, cannot well be doubted.

It was expected that, among its other benefits, it had put an end forever to the protective policy, but the act of the last session has proved to the contrary. It is, however, to be hoped that the wound it has received will yet prove to be its death-blow, and that the act of the last session will be but a last spasmodic struggle preceding its final dissolution. Great has been the progress of truth in reference to this policy, both as to its character and operation, since the stand taken by South Carolina. That it is unjust, unequal, oppressive, and unconstitutional, the great body of the Democratic party are now agreed, and, being agreed, they can never cease their determined resistance to it until it is finally overthrown, without (what cannot be anticipated) an abandonment of their political faith.

Such is a sketch of this important part of Mr. Calhoun's public life. As long as it is, not a word has been added which was not regarded as necessary to a just understanding of his motives and conduct, in the most trying scene through which it has been his fortune to pass.

Congress adjourned on the third of March, and he proceeded by public conveyance to Columbia to meet the Convention, which was to reassemble in a few days. The spring was unusually cold and backward. The snow lay several inches deep on the ground, and the Potomac was frozen. He took the stage at Alexandria, but the roads were so broken up in consequence of the frost that he had to take open mail-carts, in which he rode night and day without stopping, for a considerable portion of the way, in order to reach Columbia in time. He found the members of the Convention assembled. Knowing how

firm and resolved the state was to maintain its rights, he anticipated some dissatisfaction at the compromise, which had induced him to proceed with the speed which he used. He was not mistaken; but, on explaining fully what had been done, and the reasons on which he and his colleague had acted, the Convention readily acquiesced in the adjustment. Let it be added, in conclusion, that the earliest opportunity was seized by both parties in the state, at the next session of the Legislature, after the closing of the controversy with the General Government, to meet like friends, and agree to disband their party organization, and forget their past differences, which both sides, to their lasting honour, have faithfully and honestly observed. The consequence of so patriotic and magnanimous a course has been a degree of harmony and unanimity in the state ever since, without example in any other member of the Confederacy.

This great subject of controversy was thus happily closed in the Union and the State of South Carolina; but the recess between the last and the next session was not permitted to pass without giving birth to another question of deep and abiding excitement: the withholding of the deposits of the public money from the Bank of the United States, and their transfer, by the authority of the President, to certain state banks, selected for the purpose. To effect his object, he had removed Mr. Duane for declining to comply with his order, and appointed Mr. Taney Secretary of the Treasury in his place, in order to have it executed. The bank was made by its charter the fiscal agent of the government for the collection, distribution, and safe keeping of the public funds, unless otherwise ordered by the Secretary of the Treasury, and in that case it was provided he should report to Congress, if in session, immediately, and if not, at the commencement of the next session, his reasons for so doing. For that and other privileges, the bank paid a bonus for the charter of one million five hundred thousand dollars. The President communicated the fact of the removal of the deposits in his message at the opening of the next session, with his reasons, which were repeated and enlarged on by the Secretary of the Treasury in his Annual Report.

The subject gave rise to a long and animated discussion between the two great parties, both as to the right and expediency of the measure. Mr. Calhoun was not regarded as attached to either, and much interest was felt in the course he might take. He spoke first, and in a speech* distinguished for its ability, admitted the right of the President to remove his secretary, though he regarded it, under the circumstances, an abuse of power; but denied not only the right of the secretary to withhold the deposits so long as the funds were safe and the bank performed faithfully its duties as a fiscal agent, but also the expediency of the act. But he did not confine himself to these points. He saw, at that early period, the radical defects of the banking system, and he resolved, though he disapproved of the act of the executive, that his position should not hereafter be mistaken as that of a partisan of the bank or the banking system. With that view, after discussing the questions immediately connected with the withholding of the deposits, and some other intermediate ones, he added:

“Nor is it more true that the real question is ‘Bank or no Bank.’ Taking the deposite question in the broadest sense; suppose, as it is contended by the friends of the administration, that it involves the question of the renewal of the charter, and, consequently, the existence of the bank itself, still the banking system would stand almost untouched and unimpaired. Four hundred banks would still remain scattered over this wide Republic, and on the ruins of the United States Bank many would rise to be added to the present list. Under this aspect of the subject, the only possible question that would be presented for consideration would be, Whether the banking system was more safe, more beneficial, or more constitutional with or without the United States Bank?”

* See “Speeches,” &c., No. 7.

"If," said Mr. C., "this was a question of 'Bank or no Bank'—if it involved the existence of the banking system, it would, indeed, be a great question—one of the first magnitude; and, with my present impression, long entertained and daily increasing, I would hesitate—long hesitate—before I would be found under the banner of the system. I have great doubts, if doubts they may be called, as to the soundness and tendency of the whole system, in all its modifications. I have great fears that it will be found hostile to liberty and the advance of civilization—fatally hostile to liberty in our country, where the system exists in its worst and most dangerous form. Of all institutions affecting the great question of the distribution of wealth—a question least explored, and the most important of any in the whole range of political economy—the banking institution has, if not the greatest, one of the greatest, and, I fear, most pernicious influence on the mode of distribution. Were the question really before us, I would not shun the responsibility, as great as it might be, of freely and fully offering my sentiments on these deeply-important points; but as it is, I must content myself with the few remarks which I have thrown out."

"What, then, is the real question which now agitates the country? I answer, it is a struggle between the executive and legislative departments of the government; a struggle, not in relation to the existence of the Bank, but whether Congress or the President should have the power to create a bank, and, through it, the consequent control over the currency of the country. This is the real question. Let us not deceive ourselves. This league, this association, vivified and sustained by receiving the deposits of the public money, and having their notes converted, by being received everywhere by the treasury, into the common currency of the country, is, to all intents and purposes, a bank of the United States—the executive bank of the United States, as distinguished from that of Congress. However it might fail to perform satisfactorily the useful functions of the Bank of the United States, as incorporated by law, it would outstrip it—far outstrip it—in all its dangerous qualities, in extending the power, the influence, and the corruption of the government. It was impossible to conceive any institution more admirably calculated to advance these objects. Not only the selected banks, but the whole banking institutions of the country, and with it the entire money power, for the purpose of speculation, speculation, and corruption, would be placed under the control of the executive. A system of menaces and promises will be established: of menace to the banks in possession of the deposits, but which might not be entirely subservient to executive views, and of promise of future favours to those who may not as yet enjoy its favours. Between the two, the banks would be left without honour or honesty, and a system of speculation and stock-jobbing would commence, unequalled in the annals of our country."

Again: "So long as the question is one between a bank of the United States incorporated by Congress, and that system of banks which has been created by the will of the executive, it is an insult to the understanding to discourse on the pernicious tendency and unconstitutionality of the Bank of the United States. To bring up that question fairly and legitimately, you must go one step farther: you must *divorce the government and the bank*. You must refuse all connexion with banks. You must neither receive, nor pay away bank-notes; you must go back to the old system of the strong box, and of gold and silver. If you have a right to receive bank-notes at all—to treat them as money by receiving them in your dues, or paying them away to creditors, you have a right to create a bank. Whatever the government receives and treats as money, is money in effect; and if it be money, then they have the right, under the Constitution, to regulate it. Nay, they are bound by high obligation to adopt the most efficient means, according to the nature of that which they have recognised as money, to give it the utmost stability and uniformity of value. And if it be in the shape of bank-notes, the most efficient means of giving those qualities is a Bank of the United States, incorporated by Congress. Unless you give the highest practical uni-

formity to the value of bank-notes—so long as you receive them in your dues, and treat them as money, you violate that provision of the Constitution which provides that taxation shall be uniform throughout the United States. There is no other alternative, I repeat; you must *divorce the government entirely from the banking system*, or, if not, you are bound to incorporate a bank, as the only safe and efficient means of giving stability and uniformity to the currency. And should the deposits not be restored, and the present illegal and unconstitutional connexion between the executive and the league of banks continue, I shall feel it my duty, if no one else moves, to introduce a measure to prohibit government from receiving or touching bank-notes in any shape whatever, as the only means left of giving safety and stability to the currency, and saving the country from corruption and ruin."

Again: "Were I," said Mr. C., "to select the case best calculated to illustrate the necessity of resisting usurpation at the very commencement, and to prove how difficult it is to resist it in any subsequent stage if not met at first, I would select this very case. What, he asked, is the cause of the present usurpation of power on the part of the executive? what the motive? the temptation which has induced it to seize on the deposits? What, but the large surplus revenue? the eight or ten millions in the public treasury beyond the wants of the government? And what has put so large an amount of money in the treasury when not needed? I answer, the protective system: that system which graduated the duties, not in reference to the wants of the government, but in reference to the importunities and demands of the manufacturers, and which poured millions of dollars into the treasury beyond the most profuse demands and even the extravagance of the government—taken—unlawfully taken—from the pockets of those who honestly made it. I hold that those who make are entitled to what they make against all the world except the government, and against it except to the extent of its legitimate and constitutional wants; and that for the government to take one cent more is robbery. In violation of this sacred principle, *Congress first* removed the money by high duties, unjustly and unconstitutionally imposed, from the pockets of those who made it, where it was rightfully placed by all laws, human and divine, into the treasury. The executive, in his turn, following the example, has taken them from that deposit, and distributed them among favourite and partisan banks. The means used have been the same in both cases. The Constitution gives to Congress the power to lay duties, with a view to revenue. This power, without regarding the object for which it was intended, forgetting that it was a great trust power, necessarily limited, by the very nature of such powers, to the subject and the object of the trust, was perverted to a use never intended, that of protecting the industry of one portion of the country at the expense of another; and, under this false interpretation, the money was transferred from its natural and just deposit, the pockets of those who made it, into the public treasury, as I have stated. In this, too, the executive followed the example of Congress. By the magic construction of a few simple words—'unless otherwise ordered'—intended to confer on the Secretary of the Treasury a limited power—to give additional security to the public deposits, he has, in like manner, perverted this power, and made it the instrument, by similar sophistry, of drawing the money from the treasury, and bestowing it, as I have stated, on favourite and partisan banks. Would to God, said Mr. C., would to God I could reverse the whole of this nefarious operation, and terminate the controversy by returning the money to the pockets of the honest and industrious citizens, by the sweat of whose brows it was made, with whom only it can be rightfully deposited. But as this cannot be done, I must content myself by giving a vote to return it to the public treasury, where it was ordered to be deposited by an act of the Legislature."

These extracts contain an explanation, not only of Mr. Calhoun's views of the banking system at the time, but also of those which have governed his after

course in reference to the banks, and most of the prominent questions since agitated. He believed that there was, at the time, a strong tendency in all the departments of the government to usurp power, and that it originated with Congress. It is, indeed, a settled opinion with him, which he has long entertained, and the reasons for which he recently explained in his speech on the veto, that usurpations in the Federal Government almost necessarily originate with Congress; but that the powers which it gains by usurping those of the states or people, adds, not to its strength, but to that of the other departments, and especially of the executive, in whose hands it becomes the means of usurping in turn the powers of Congress, and controlling its proceedings. He accordingly attributed the great power and influence of the executive at this time, and its tendency to encroachment, to the previous encroachments of Congress, especially in passing the tariff of '28. That having been prostrated by the interposition of the State of South Carolina and the Compromise Act at the last session, he next turned his efforts to arresting, what he believed to be its natural consequence, the encroachments of the executive; and was thus, and to that extent, brought for the time to act with the opposition party, then called National Republicans. But he occupied throughout his own independent State Rights ground and principles, from which he in no instance departed. Wherever they led, he followed, without regarding whether they brought him to co-operate with the opposition or administration, or left him alone in the Senate to maintain and defend his own separate and peculiar position.

His course in the very case under consideration strikingly illustrates these remarks. He essentially differed on this important occasion from both of the great parties, administration and opposition. The former was in favour of the league of state banks as the fiscal agents and depositaries of the Government, and opposed both to a national bank and the divorce of government from the banks. The latter, on the contrary, were in favour of a national bank, and opposed to the league of banks and the divorce; while Mr. Calhoun and the State Rights party were in favour of the divorce, or what has since been called the Independent Treasury, and opposed to a national bank, and any connexion with the banking system in any way. It was in conformity to these views, and after consulting Mr. Calhoun and the prominent members of the party, that General Gordon, then a distinguished representative from Virginia, introduced at the time a bill to establish the Independent Treasury. It failed. The public mind was not then prepared; but to him will belong the lasting honour of introducing one of the most important measures of modern times.

The removal of the deposits was not the only question of importance which was agitated during the session. Among others, the motion of Mr. Webster, who was then chairman of the Committee on Finance, for leave to bring in a bill to recharter the Bank of the United States for six years, gave rise to an interesting discussion. Mr. Calhoun seized the opportunity, not to discuss the question of renewal, but that of the currency generally, which he showed, even then, to be deeply diseased, and to warn the Government and country of the approach of the catastrophe which has since befallen them. He pointed out the cause and character of the disease, and the remedy that should be adopted to prevent, if possible, the approaching shock, or at least to lessen its violence. His speech* on the occasion is one of the ablest and most remarkable for its forecast he ever made. It is prophetic throughout, and was pronounced by one of the senators, himself a speaker of distinguished abilities and long experience, the ablest he ever heard. To appreciate its merits, it must be read.

Upon this occasion he exhibited, in a remarkable degree, that statesmanlike faculty which has enabled him to do so much to direct events, by always taking the nearest practicable step towards his object, instead of refusing to do anything unless he could effect what was the best in the abstract. The great ends in his system of life, whether public or private, he has ever held to be fixed by reason and

* See "Speeches," &c., No. 8.

general rules ; but the time and mode of attaining them he regarded as questions of expediency, to be determined by the circumstances under which he is called to act. If things are now wrong, he who refuses to make any change for the better because he cannot obtain at once what he believes to be best in the abstract, is responsible for them as they exist, and should be classed rather with those who sustain the present wrongs than with those who pursue the right : for in practice, the effects of their action are the same ; and yet he who makes the nearest attainable approach to the right is too often confounded with those who maintain the wrong, and postponed for others who, content to think correctly, are yet too timid to act if there be danger of misconstruction, and really contribute to the continuance of that which they condemn. This is a species of fear which Mr. Calhoun has never known. Seeing clearly his own ends, which have been long fixed by observation and reflection, he judges, with a rare sagacity, of the nearest practicable approach which can be made to them under the circumstances, and advances forward to the boundaries assigned by prudence without fear of the enemy, and halts when he has taken as much ground as he can occupy, without regard to the remonstrances of his followers, who take their counsels merely from zeal, and do not properly ascertain the limits upon human power, and the controlling force of events. It is thus that he is ever in progress ; and although generally in advance of his party and the world, in a long life he has never been forced to abandon any forward movement, or recede from his end. He uses time to control circumstances, and directs them both to his great object, which he is ever on the march sooner or later to attain. This it is which makes him the master-statesman of his age, and thus he has been able to accomplish so much with such inconsiderable means.

Upon the occasion to which we now refer, he exhibited this statesmanlike mode of thinking and acting in a remarkable degree. He sought no trial of skill in oratory where victories were to be barren of results to the country. He avoided all those topics of personal or party excitement, whose fleeting interest belonged to the time and not to the case : but, looking to the exigencies of the country, and not to the mere feelings of the day, he surveyed the whole ground with military precision, and made a masterly reconnoissance of the field. As abstract questions, he did not enter into the nature of the banking system, or its constitutional propriety. In discussing the disease, it was necessary to touch slightly upon the tendencies of the banking system ; and these touches, like the line of Apelles, showed the master's hand, and his thorough acquaintance with the subject. He traced clearly the deep seat of the malady, and developed its probable progress and consequences unless corrected. He then addressed himself to the discovery of some remedy, which should be both safe and efficient. With the propriety and constitutionality of the banking system as abstract questions he had nothing to do, and upon them he only touched so far as they bore upon the remedy which he had in view. Banks were in existence, and through them the currency was indisputably deeply diseased. There was not the least probability of any successful effort to force the Government to abandon the use of paper. He contented himself, therefore, with showing that, if the Government could use paper, it could also regulate its value ; and the question was to ascertain the best means of reaching that object. He proposed a continuance of the bank for twelve years, under severe restrictions, and upon conditions which would gradually diminish the volume of paper currency, so as to enable the Government, at the end of that period, to dispense with its use altogether, if it should choose to do so, without any shock to the community. In this point of view, it was of no importance whether the original charter was constitutional or not. Suppose it to be unconstitutional, it was a question whether we would rid ourselves of the evil gradually, and without injury to the community, or whether we should repeal it at once, at the sacrifice of all of its immense connected interests, and send the whole toppling down the abyss together. He thought there was a great difference between doing and undoing ; and while he

would never originate what he believed to be unauthorized by the Constitution, he would take his own time for repairing the breaches already made in it, and so conduct the process as to produce the least possible amount of suffering in the country. It was thus that he agreed to compromise an unconstitutional tariff by allowing time, so as to save vast and meritorious interests which were connected with it; and thus, too, he now sought (to use his own words) to "unbank the banks." Here, too, he exhibited an instance of that cautious process by which all real statesmen conduct their reforms, and proved his aversion to hazarding the vast interests of a community by any sudden change which was not justified by experience, but suggested only by theoretic opinions. It was clearly seen, both in this and his preceding speeches, that he disapproved the banking system, and saw, as far as mere reason without experience could point, that its tendencies were evil; and yet he forbore to strike at it until there was time to verify his reflection by experience, and the period should arrive when an effectual blow might be given. If the system were good, it was clear to him that it required severe restrictions and judicious regulation; if evil, he was equally decided that it ought to be removed gradually, so as to produce the least shock to the community. In either point of view, his course of conduct would be the same up to a certain period, to which he limited his prescription. The question of his future action he reserved for the time itself, to be determined by the lights of a more matured experience. It was not his object to amuse theorists or gratify a mere taste for speculation, but he sought a practical remedy for a disease under which the community was likely to suffer most intensely. As his suggestions were not taken, we can come to no certain conclusion as to what they would have led, but posterity will form its opinion as to their probable result. Of this, however, we feel assured, that the speech will always be considered as most remarkable for its political forecast.

So deeply was he impressed with the approaching danger, that when he understood Mr. Webster contemplated making the motion he afterward made, to renew the charter, he sent word through a friend of his, who had called on him, that he feared he was about to make a false move, and said that, although he and Mr. Webster were scarcely on speaking terms, in consequence of the occurrences of the last session, he would be glad to have a full conversation with him before he made his motion, if he would give him an opportunity by calling on him. The next morning he called. Mr. Calhoun stated his objection to the course he proposed, and what he thought ought to be done. Mr. Webster took time before he gave an answer, but informed Mr. Calhoun, when he called next day to learn his decision, that he concluded not to change his course. Mr. Calhoun expressed his regret, and on being asked by Mr. Webster whether he would oppose his motion, he replied no; but added that he believed the government and country were approaching a period of great peril, and that he felt that it would be due both to the public and himself to embrace the occasion to state at large the opinions and views he had expressed to him. He, in fact, regarded it as the critical moment; and when he saw that it was permitted to pass without doing anything to prevent the disorder into which the currency was falling, he made up his mind that what has since followed was inevitable.

In this connexion, and governed by the same views, he gave a decided support to what is called the Gold Bill, which raised the relative value of gold compared to silver, and the establishment of the branch mints, both of which he regarded as intimately connected with a return to a permanent and sound currency. The administration favoured both measures, and Mr. Clay opposed them. The discussion on both was conducted principally by him and Mr. Calhoun.

The proceedings of the Senate on the removal of the deposits was followed by the President's protest, which gave rise to a full and animated discussion in the Senate. Mr. Calhoun took decided ground against its reception. In the course of his argument, he maintained the position that the Constitution vests all

discretionary powers in Congress, to the exclusion of the executive and judiciary departments; and that neither of them, nor any office under the government, can exercise any power not authorized by law, but such as is expressly granted by the Constitution. To sustain this important position, he cited the provision in the Constitution which gives to Congress the power "to pass all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing" (that is, the powers granted to Congress), "*and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or office thereof.*" The provision is express, and the position incontrovertible; and yet, strange as it may seem, it had been theretofore entirely overlooked, although it is one of the most important provisions in the whole instrument. It is the provision, in fact, which binds up all the parts in one, making of them one government, instead of consisting, as they would without it, of three hostile departments, each with the authority to assume whatever right it might think proper to carry into execution its share of the granted powers. One of the important consequences of this provision of the Constitution is to subject the removing power to the regulation of law. The mere *fact* that the power of removing from office is *not granted* by the Constitution to the President, is conclusive proof that it can only be exercised by the authority of law, and, of course, subject to such limitation as it may impose. It was, indeed, an investigation into the origin of that power which led Mr. Calhoun to the examination of the Constitution, which ended in making this important disclosure, as it may fairly be termed.

At the next session a special committee of nine members was, on motion of Mr. Calhoun, raised, in order to inquire into the extent of the executive patronage, the cause of its great increase of late, and the expediency and practicability of reducing the same, and the means of doing it. After a minute and laborious investigation, he made a full and able report* on all the points, of which 10,000 copies were ordered to be printed by the Senate.

One of the leading objects which he had in view was to strike at the surplus revenue. He anticipated it would be large, although the Compromise Act had repealed the duties on more than one half of the imports. But even that, aided by the gradual reduction on all the residue, could not prevent the accumulation. He dreaded it, not only because it would add greatly to the patronage of the executive by extending its control over the banks, and, through them, over the whole community, but still more because it would be the source of boundless speculation and corruption. To ascertain its probable extent, he entered into a minute examination of the finances, and after exploring the whole ground, he estimated the surplus at an average of not less than nine millions of dollars annually for the whole period the Compromise Act had to run. As moderate as his estimate proved to be, it was violently assailed, at the time, for its supposed extravagance.

But time rolled on, and at the opening of the next session, his estimate, instead of proving extravagant, fell short of the actual amount by millions, and that with a surplus daily increasing with an accelerated velocity, under a new impulse, which was swelling it beyond all assignable limits. Here a brief explanation is necessary, in order to have a just conception of the danger to which the government and country were exposed at this period.

The tariff of 1828 gave the first impulse to that great expansion of the currency, which, under the influence of different causes, both foreign and domestic, was still on the increase, and continued so till just before the final explosion in 1837. So powerful was the first impulse, from the high duties imposed in 1828, that the currency was doubled, in the manufacturing portions of the Union, in eighteen months from the passage of the act. On the accumulation of the surplus revenue from the same cause, after the payment of the public debt, a new impulse was given to the expansion. The surplus was deposited with the banks, and became, in fact, so much additional bank capital, in the least responsible and

* See "Speeches," &c., No. 10.

most dangerous form. This, with other causes, and especially the withdrawal of the deposits from the United States Bank, and the approaching termination of its charter, gave a great additional impulse to the whole system. State banks were multiplied in all directions, with but little capital, and charters less guarded than ever. All these concurring causes tended greatly to increase the expansion, and, by necessary consequence, to produce a corresponding augmentation of prices, to which, however, there was an important exception. The price of all public lands which had been offered at public sales and not sold, was fixed by law at \$1 25 per acre, and could not, of course, partake of the general rise. The quantity of such lands was great, not less, probably, than two hundred millions of acres, and thus a universal spirit of speculation, engendered by an inflated currency and high duties, was turned in that direction.

The facility of purchasing was not less than the quantity to be purchased. The deposits of the government in the state banks selected as its fiscal agents was upward of forty millions of dollars, consisting almost exclusively of bank-notes. From this vast source speculators and political partisans drew their funds, in the form of discount or loan, in exchange for which they gave their own promissory notes, and received the notes deposited by the government, or, what was the same, a credit in bank founded on them. These, in turn, were exchanged for the public lands, when they passed into the hands of the receivers, and were by them returned to the banks as new deposits, to take the same rapid round again and again, and sweeping away from the people, by means of their own funds, a corresponding amount of their land, and swelling, in the same proportion, the amount brought to the credit of the government by the banks, under the fallacious name of public money in the treasury, but which, in reality, was nothing more than the notes in bank given by speculators and partisans in exchange for the public lands.

In this operation every revolution but increased the force of the next, which, if left to operate unchecked, must end, as was manifest, in the entire absorption of the public domain and the universal explosion of the banking system, with the ultimate loss of what was due to the Government. It was about the time when these powerful causes began to operate with such effect as to be seen and felt by all, that the administration obtained a majority in the Senate, where it had for some time been in a minority; on which Mr. Calhoun, who had moved, as has been stated, at the preceding session, in anticipation of the danger, rose in his place and said, that, as the friends of the administration were now in a majority, he left it to them to take the lead in providing a remedy for this alarming state of things.

All now felt that something must be done, and that promptly, to regulate and control the deposit banks, and to save the public funds and the national domain. Three remedies were proposed. The first was, to absorb the current revenue and the vast surplus already accumulated by the increase of the public expenditures; and, with that view, a resolution was actually introduced in the Senate and passed, calling on the executive to know how much could possibly be spent on military defences. The next was to vest what was not needed to meet the current expenses of the government in state stocks; and the other, to pass an act regulating and controlling the deposit banks, and to place the surplus in deposit in the treasury of the several states. The first two came from the friends of the administration, and the last was proposed by Mr. Calhoun as an amendment to the second.

It was the choice of evils. Something must be done. Anything was better than the continuance of the actual state of things. This all acknowledged. The objection to the first was great. So sudden and great an increase of expenditures when prices were so extravagant, and when, without a vast enlargement of the disbursing departments, there could be no efficient accountability, could not but end in much waste, loss, extravagance, and corruption, to say no

thing of the great increase of patronage. But the great and decisive objection was, that expenditures sufficiently large to absorb the surplus would necessarily destroy, in their effects, the Compromise Act, and restore the protective system. It is easy to raise the expenditures, but very difficult to reduce them, of which the experience of the last five or six years affords abundant proof. The revenue at the time, though far beyond the wants of the government, was in the regular course of reduction under the compromise, which would, in the course of six years, bring it down to a sum only sufficient for the support of the Government with rigid economy. To have raised the expenditures sufficiently high to absorb the surplus, under such circumstances, would have required an unusual disbursement of between thirty and forty millions of dollars for the whole period, as experience has shown; and, of course, a sudden reduction of nearly twenty millions, to bring down the expenditures to what, with proper management, would be necessary. So great and sudden a reduction would prove impracticable, and the certain result would be loans, debts, the violation of the compromise, and a renewal of the protective system. All this was urged against the scheme by Mr. Calhoun at the time. It was defeated, at least in a great degree; and it may well be asked, after the experience of the last two years, what would have been the consequences if it had not been, when even its partial effects have brought on the Government and country, to the extent they have, the very evils then anticipated by him.

The objection to vesting the surplus in state stocks was not less serious. Among so many other mischievous consequences, it would have been grossly partial; but the insurmountable objection was the danger of entangling the Government with the state stocks.

This scheme was in substance as much a deposit of the surplus revenue with the states as that proposed by Mr. Calhoun as an amendment to it. The latter placed the money with the states upon their promise to return it, if the General Government should require it, while the former exchanged the surplus for the obligations, by which the states, in another form, were bound to repay it; so that each scheme proposed to exchange the surplus for state credit in some form. With state stocks depreciating as they have since done, it would have been as unpopular and impossible to have used any means to recover the money by selling them, as it would have been to have recalled it directly from the states themselves. The difference was, that Mr. Calhoun's scheme bestowed upon the states all the patronage resulting from the use of the money, while the other gave it to the Secretary of the Treasury, in whom it vested an almost unlimited discretion, and to whom it gave the dangerous power of dealing in those stocks to large amounts. That this plan would have resulted in the entire loss of the money, with little or no benefit to the states, we may see from our past experience. The immense increase of executive patronage to which it would have led may also be estimated. But the endless train of mischiefs which would have followed in some of its remote consequences it would be difficult to measure, as we may readily perceive, when we come to consider the use which might have been made of such a power in the federal executive by those who have conceived the monstrous scheme of assuming the state debts. Indeed, the existence of such a power would naturally seem to suggest such a use of it, with the ideas now prevalent in the minds of many of our public men on the subject of state-indebtedness.

Nor was the last of the alternatives free from serious objections; but, under all circumstances, it was thought to be the least so by Congress, and it accordingly passed through both houses by a large majority. Mr. Calhoun made a very comprehensive and able speech against the first two, and explained his views of the substitute he offered.

This was not the only important measure that claimed his attention during the session. In the preceding recess the Abolitionists had for the first time

regularly organized as a party, with a powerful press, and attempted, by systematic operations, to force its publications on the South, with a view of acting on its slave population. It carried deep excitement throughout that entire section. Everywhere meetings were held and the attempt denounced, and the other sections called upon to adopt measures to stay the evil. The President, in his message at the opening of the session, called the attention of Congress to the subject, and recommended the adoption of efficient measures to prevent the circulation of their incendiary publications through the mail. Mr. Calhoun, although he appreciated and highly approved the patriotic motives of the President, could not agree with him to the full extent of his recommendation. He saw the danger of permitting Congress to assume the right of judging of what constituted an incendiary publication; for if it be conceded that it has the right of determining what is incendiary, and to prevent its circulation, it would, by necessary consequence, carry with it the right of determining what was not, and to enforce its circulation against the laws of such states as might prohibit them. With this impression, and in order to prevent the adoption of erroneous views, at the outset, on a subject so vitally important to the slave-holding states, he moved the reference of the portion of the message containing the recommendation to a special committee, of which he was appointed chairman.

The report* he made took a very original and able survey of the whole ground, and conclusively proved, both by arguments drawn from the Constitution and the practice of the Government, that it belonged to the states separately to determine what is or is not calculated to affect or disturb its internal police, including its peace and safety, and to adopt the measures necessary for their security; and that it was the duty of the General Government not only to conform its acts, in reference to the mail or for the regulation of commerce, to the legislation of the states in such cases, but to aid in the execution of the laws of the states, as far as its power would permit, when it became necessary. The report was accompanied by a bill, drawn up in conformity with these views, and was ordered to the third reading by the casting vote of the Vice-president, but finally failed.

This bill gave rise in the Senate to a very animated and interesting debate, principally between Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Davis of Massachusetts, in which the arguments for and against are strongly presented on both sides. For original views of the Constitution and strength of argument, Mr. Calhoun's speech† on the occasion ranks with his ablest, and is worthy of the study of all who desire to understand some of the most important provisions of that instrument.

During the same session he made another speech‡ on the same subject, distinguished for its foresight and knowledge of the Constitution. For the first time there began to pour in that flood of petitions on the subject of abolition which has since deluged Congress. The members from the non-slave-holding states on both sides, though adverse to the petitions, were opposed to taking strong and decided grounds against them; and their respective political friends in the South were naturally indisposed to force them to take higher grounds than they were inclined to do. The result was a sort of compromise, to receive the petitions, but not to refer or act upon them. Mr. Calhoun, whose rule has ever been to meet danger "on the frontier," to use his own expression, saw the peril of receiving the petitions, and determined to take a decided stand against it. He expected to stand alone; but with such force did he maintain his objections§ to receiving, that he was supported by a large portion of the Southern senators, and the motion to receive was laid on the table. Since then, no petition of the kind has been received by the Senate.

The prominent question at the next session was the Specie Circular. The President had issued an order in the recess prohibiting the receipt of bank-notes, or anything but specie in payment of the public lands. The opposition

* See "Speeches," &c., No. 11.

† Ibid. No. 12.

‡ Ibid. No. 13.

§ Ibid. No. 14.

was unanimously opposed to it, both on the ground of expediency, and the want of authority on his part to issue such an order, while his friends and supporters were greatly divided, some sustaining, but the greater part opposing the measure. Mr. Calhoun agreed with those who denied the right of the President to issue the order, on the broad principle that neither the Constitution nor the laws conferred it, and that the executive had no power but what was conferred by the one or the other. Nevertheless, he declined voting for the bill to supersede the order, which was passed by a great majority, a large portion of the administration party voting for it. His reasons were, that the diseased state of the currency was beyond remedy, and whether the circular was repealed or not, the result would be the same. He regarded the catastrophe as inevitable, and that the only question was, at whose door the responsibility should be laid. He saw that if the circular should be rescinded, it would be charged on those by whose vote it was done: and as he felt conscious that he had done all that he could to arrest the approaching calamity, he was determined to avoid all responsibility, and therefore declined voting for the bill. He was entitled to the floor, and intended to offer his reasons at large; but when it came up on its passage, was accidentally prevented from speaking. On his return home in March, several of his friends in Charleston, interested in trade and the banks, asked his opinion of the prospect ahead. His reply was, that the storm was approaching, and was just at hand, and his advice was to reef—reef—reef—quickly and closely, to avoid being wrecked. In two months the banks suspended payments, and the commerce and business of the country were prostrated.

During the same session an important question arose in reference to the admission of Michigan. She had been admitted at the preceding session on the condition of agreeing to the boundary between her and Ohio, as presented by the act for her admission. The Legislature of the state, in compliance with the act of Congress, called a convention of the people of the state, in order to determine whether the conditions should be accepted or not. The convention rejected the condition. Subsequently, an informal meeting or caucus was called by the party in favour of accepting it, without legal authority, or any other ceremony than is used for convening such meetings for ordinary political objects. It met, and agreed to the condition, which had been in due form considered and rejected by the convention legally and regularly called. The Committee on the Judiciary, to whom the subject was referred, reported in favour of admitting the state on the authority of the informal meeting or caucus, for it was, in fact, nothing more. Mr. Calhoun opposed the report in two speeches* on the ground of the unconstitutionality and the danger of the precedent, in which he displayed, with great force of argument, that thorough knowledge of the Constitution for which he is remarkable. But, as powerful as was his resistance, it proved vain. The bill passed, and has made a precedent, the danger of which time only can disclose.

CHAPTER VI.

in which the Narrative is continued until the Termination of the Second Session of the 27th Congress.

THE suspension of the banks in the spring of '37 marks an important period in the life of Mr. Calhoun and the political history of the country. Fortunately, under the operation of the joint resolution of 1816, and the Deposit Act of the preceding year, in the passage of both of which he took a decided part, the act of suspension of itself entirely separated the Government and the banks. The former prohibited the Government from receiving the notes of suspended banks

* See "Speeches," &c., Nos. 16 and 17.

in the public dues; and the latter prohibited it from using such banks as the depositaries of the public money, or as the fiscal agents of the Government. Without these, the union of the Government with the banks would still have continued, and the former would have found itself reduced to the same condition that it was at the end of the war in 1815, of receiving and paying away the notes of discredited banks, and using them as its depositaries and agents in the management of its revenue.

The suspension, as has been stated, was not unexpected to Mr. Calhoun; and he was not long in making up his mind as to the course he would pursue. He resolved to resist the reunion of the Government and the banks in any form, and to oppose the establishment of a national bank. Indeed, he regarded it as the first occasion that ever occurred which offered an opportunity for carrying into execution what he had long believed to be the true policy of the country, the divorce of the Government from all connexion with banks; an opinion which he had first publicly and plainly indicated in 1834, in his speech on the removal of the deposits, already cited. He made known his determination to a few confidential friends long before the call of the extraordinary session, and resisted decidedly all attempts to influence him to support a national bank.

With his course thus fixed, he went to Washington at the commencement of the extra session, resolved to await the development of the views of the two great parties before he should publicly make known his own, and to act with or against them, according as their course might agree or disagree with his own. He listened attentively to the reading of the President's Message at the opening of the session, which explicitly opposed the establishment of a United States Bank, and the renewal of the union of the Government and the banks, and made up his mind, as soon as the reading was finished, that he would give it his support.

The impression got out that Mr. Calhoun would support the message. It caused much excitement; but as it was only a rumour, the development of his course in his place in the Senate was looked to with deep solicitude. It was not long before an occasion offered. The Committee on Finances reported, shortly after the message was received, a bill for the establishment of what was called a Sub-treasury, but without any provision for collecting the Government dues in specie.

Mr. Calhoun rose in his place, and declared himself in favour of the entire separation of the Government from the banks, but denounced in strong terms the report of the committee for omitting what he regarded as essential to a separation; a provision for collecting the public dues in the constitutional currency, without which the measure they had reported would prove a perfect abortion. He declared that if that was what was meant by a sub-treasury, he washed his hands of all concern with it. His remarks made a deep sensation, and he was solicited by many of the friends of the administration to bring forward, in the shape of an amendment, a proposition to collect the public dues in specie. He replied that he had not intended to offer any proposition of his own; but, as they requested it, he would comply with their wishes. When the bill for the issue of treasury notes came up a few days after, he stated his opinion at large on the subject of the separation of the Government and the banks, in a speech, which made a permanent impression on the public mind, in reference to the whole banking system. He gave notice in his speech* of his intention of moving an amendment, at the proper time, to the bill, for the gradual but permanent separation of the Government from the banks, but finally agreed to postpone his motion till the bill for the establishment of the Sub-treasury should come under consideration. When that came up, he moved his amendment, and made a second speech,† in which he traced the rise and progress of the banking system, and marked the several stages through which it had

* See "Speeches," &c., No. 18.

† See "Speeches," &c., No. 19.

passed; he showed that it contained within itself the principle of its own destruction; and finally exposed the mischievous character and tendency of the system, economically, politically, and morally. His amendment prevailed, and the bill passed the Senate as amended, but failed in the House.

Such was Mr. Calhoun's course on this memorable occasion. All things considered, it has seldom been equalled for patriotism, magnanimity, sagacity, and boldness. We have seen him, in obedience to his principles, and what seemed to be his duty, separate himself from General Jackson and the party when in the plenitude of their power, and when he held the second office in the Government, with every prospect of reaching the highest. We have seen him, after his separation, instead of courting the opposition in order to maintain himself against the power and influence of the executive, again pursue a course in obedience to principle and duty, which brought him into direct conflict with both, and left him with his state alone to maintain the unequal struggle against a course of policy which, he believed, if not arrested, would prove ruinous to the Government and country. We have seen him, when the state, in pursuance of his course, had effected its object, availing himself of the aid of the opposition to bring down the power and influence of the executive department (originating in the encroachments of the Congress) within proper constitutional, legal limits. That done, we next see him, when the reaction of the very system to oppose which he separated from the party had prostrated them, and when the opposition with which he had for a time acted were preparing to rush on and overwhelm them in their weakness, and to re-establish their old doctrines and principles, rising up promptly, overcoming all personal feelings, forgetting all past differences, boldly repelling the assaults of his recent allies, and defending and protecting those from whom he had been so long separated, and by whom he had been much wronged, in stern obedience to his principles and to what he believed to be his duty: thus clearly showing, by his whole course throughout this eventful period, that *when they were at stake*, neither ambition, fear, enmity, friendship, nor popularity could bend him from his course.

The stand which he took drew down on him, as might be expected, the bitter denunciation and vengeance of the opposition, who had now assumed the name of Whigs. Among other things, they charged him with desertion, as if he had ever been of their party, and when, in fact, he had kept himself distinct from both the great parties from the time of his separation from General Jackson. That there might be no mistake on that point, he took the earliest opportunity in the Senate to avow what his position was. In his speech on Mr. Webster's motion, in 1834, to renew the charter of the United States Bank for six years, he said, "I am the partisan of no class, nor, let me add, of either political party. I am neither of the opposition nor administration. If I act with the former in any instance, it is because I approve of their course on the particular occasion, and I shall always be happy to act with them when I do approve. If I oppose the administration, if I desire to see power change hands, it is because I disapprove of the general course of those in authority."

To which he added: "But mine has not been, nor will it be, a systematic opposition. Whatever measure of theirs I deem right I shall cheerfully support, and I only desire that they will afford me more frequent occasions for support and fewer for opposition than they have heretofore done." He often avowed the same sentiments, and acted throughout in strict conformity to the principles here laid down; and when Mr. Clay, for the first time in the Senate, assumed the name of Whig for himself and the party, intending to comprehend under it all that did not support the administration, the State Rights as well as the national parties, Mr. Calhoun rose in his place and disavowed the name, as applied to himself, and expressed himself contented with the name he bore. If to this it is added, he never, on any occasion, joined in their political meetings or party consultations, and always kept himself free on every question to

follow the dictates of his own judgment, it must be obvious that the charge of desertion is wholly groundless. In truth, he never from the first permitted his party obligations to overrule his attachment to principles or duty, and throughout this trying period he availed himself of the aid of whatever party fell in with his course for the time, to effect the important objects he had in view, but without permitting them, in any instance, to divert him from his end.

At the next session, the Sub-treasury, or the reorganization of the treasury, with the view of collecting, safe keeping, and disbursing the public moneys through its own officers, without the agency of banks, again became the prominent question. The subject was again referred in the Senate to the Committee of Finance, which reported a bill much fuller in its details, and containing what is called the specie feature, that is, a provision for the gradual, but entire separation of the government from the banks, similar to that moved at the extra session by Mr. Calhoun. Mr. Rives moved, as a substitute, to strike out the whole bill after the enacting clause, and to insert in lieu the use of the state banks as the depositaries and fiscal agents of the government, as formerly used, but with some additional modifications. The discussion took place on the amendment, and the argument principally turned on the respective merits of the two systems. Both sides put out their strength. The debate was animated and able. Mr. Calhoun took a prominent part, and greatly distinguished himself in the speech he delivered on the occasion.* This drew down on him pointed personal attacks from the two great leaders of the opposition, Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster, with whom he had to contend single handed. The conflict excited deep and universal interest.† It was called in the journals of the day the war of the giants: and it is no more than justice to him to say, that he repelled their charges with signal success, and turned back the war with effect.‡

After the defeat of the amendment offered by Mr. Rives, and just before the question was put on the engrossment, a motion was made to strike out the specie feature, which succeeded by the united vote of the opposition and a considerable portion of the friends of the administration. The effect of the amendment would be for the government to collect the dues in the notes of the banks, and deposit them for safe keeping in its own safes and vaults, to which Mr. Calhoun had from the first avowed his hostility. He reserved his opposition until the bill had been perfected, according to the views of those who had made the amendment, and the question put on the engrossment, when he stated his objections in a short, but strong and decisive speech, showing that it was liable to all the dangers and objections for which the pet-bank system was obnoxious, attended by additional dangers and objections peculiar to itself. The bill, nevertheless, passed the Senate, but the argument was not without its effects. The views of Mr. Calhoun were almost unanimously sustained by the party in the House and the country. The bill failed, and the session terminated in leaving things as they were.

It was during this session that Mr. Calhoun introduced his resolutions on the subject of abolition. He had always regarded this as the most mischievous species of political fanaticism, and the only question which could really endanger the Union. He saw the non-slave-holding states closely divided between two great parties, and a third growing up and organizing upon a principle which they believed of a higher importance than any involved in the political issues of the day. Should this sect continue to increase without opposition from either of the great parties, its influence might become strong enough to decide the political contests, and so formidable that it would be courted. As their ends could only be attained through consolidation, it was likely that they would join the party whose principles had that tendency. The best interests of the Union, and the integrity of the Republican party, seemed to require the line to

* See "Speeches," &c., Nos. 20, 21, and 22.

be drawn at once between that party and the Abolitionists. He accordingly moved the following resolutions, which present so strongly his views of the relations of the General Government and of the states to this subject, that we shall extract them.

"Mr. Calhoun then submitted the following resolutions :

"Resolved, That, in the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the states adopting the same acted severally as free, independent, and sovereign states ; and that each, for itself, by its own voluntary assent, entered the Union with the view to its increased security against all dangers, domestic as well as foreign, and the more perfect and secure enjoyment of its advantages, natural, political, and social.

"Resolved, That, in delegating a portion of their powers to be exercised by the Federal Government, the states retained severally the exclusive and sole right over their own domestic institutions and police, and are alone responsible for them ; and that any intermeddling of any one or more states, or a combination of their citizens, with the domestic institutions and police of the others, on any ground or under any pretext whatever, political, moral, or religious, with a view to their alteration or subversion, is an assumption of superiority not warranted by the Constitution, insulting to the states interfered with, tending to endanger their domestic peace and tranquillity, subversive of the objects for which the Constitution was formed, and, by necessary consequence, tending to weaken and destroy the Union itself.

"Resolved, That this Government was instituted and adopted by the several states of this Union as a common agent, in order to carry into effect the powers which they had delegated by the Constitution for their mutual security and prosperity ; and that, in fulfilment of this high and sacred trust, this Government is bound so to exercise its powers as to give, as far as may be practicable, increased stability and security to the domestic institutions of the states that compose the Union ; and that it is the solemn duty of the Government to resist all attempts by one portion of the Union to use it as an instrument to attack the domestic institutions of another, or to weaken or destroy such institutions, instead of strengthening and upholding them, as it is in duty bound to do.

"Resolved, That domestic slavery, as it exists in the Southern and Western States of this Union, composes an important part of their domestic institutions, inherited from their ancestors, and existing at the adoption of the Constitution, by which it is recognised as constituting an essential element in the distribution of its powers among the states ; and that no change of opinion or feeling on the part of the other states of the Union in relation to it can justify them or their citizens in open and systematic attacks thereon, with the view to its overthrow ; and that all such attacks are in manifest violation of the mutual and solemn pledge to protect and defend each other, given by the states respectively on entering into the Constitutional compact which formed the Union, and, as such, is a manifest breach of faith, and a violation of the most solemn obligations, moral and religious.

"Resolved, That the intermeddling of any state or states, or their citizens, to abolish slavery in this district, or any of the territories, on the ground or under the pretext that it is immoral or sinful, or the passage of any act or measure of Congress with that view, would be a direct and dangerous attack on the institutions of all the slave-holding states.

"Resolved, That the union of these states rests on an equality of rights and advantages among its members ; and that whatever destroys that equality tends to destroy the Union itself ; and that it is the solemn duty of all, and more especially of this body, which represents the states in their corporate capacity, to resist all attempts to discriminate between the states in extending the benefits of the Government to the several portions of the Union ; and that to refuse to extend to the Southern and Western States any advantage which would tend to

strengthen or render them more secure, or increase their limits or population by the annexation of new territory or states, on the assumption or under the pretext that the institution of slavery, as it exists among them, is immoral or sinful, or otherwise obnoxious, would be contrary to that equality of rights and advantages which the Constitution was intended to secure alike to all the members of the Union, and would, in effect, disfranchise the slave-holding states, withholding from them the advantages, while it subjected them to the burdens of the Government."

These, with the exception of the last, passed the Senate with some slight modifications. In the course of a long and running debate on these resolutions, he examined the relations of our government to this subject. He showed those who viewed slavery only in the abstract, that they could never thus form a true conception of their duty in the existing state of things. It was not a question to be considered in the abstract, but in the concrete, and with a full view of all the circumstances connected with it. In a large portion of our country, two races had been thrown together in nearly equal numbers, and separated into castes by a natural line too strongly drawn ever to be effaced. The question was not as to what different state of things could be conceived as more desirable, but what was the best relation to establish between two such races thrown together under such circumstances. Under the institution of slavery, both races had prospered, and the black especially had made a more rapid advance in civilization than it had ever done before in the same space of time and under other circumstances. These were facts to induce those to pause who were tempted, by considerations of abstract philanthropy, to overstep the bounds which were imposed on their action not only by the Constitution, but also by an enlightened spirit of benevolence itself. If other considerations were wanting, he pointed to the incidental political benefits arising from an institution which harmonized the relations between capital and labour, and thus introduced a spirit conservative of both interests, so far as Southern influence could be felt in the action of the General Government. The passage of these resolutions placed the Abolitionists in direct hostility to the Republican party, and led to a state of things which was far safer to the party and the Union than to have permitted so dangerous a sect to grow up unopposed. The Republicans, from all sections of the Union, found in these propositions a common ground where they could stand, without danger of schism upon the question which threatened most to divide them.

At the next session the prominent subject of debate was Mr. Crittenden's bill to prevent the interference of certain Federal officers in elections. Mr. Calhoun spoke with much power and effect on the occasion.* After discussing the subject fully against the bill on its merits, both as to its constitutionality and expediency, and showing that its effects would be the opposite of what was intended—that it would increase instead of diminishing the influence of the executive—he declared himself the fixed and strenuous friend of reducing the influence and patronage of that branch of the government within the narrowest limits consistent with the Constitution and the object for which it was created. He then proceeded to show that the legitimate means of effecting that was to restrict the revenue and expenditure to the legitimate and constitutional wants of the Government, and to hold the executive power strictly to its appropriate sphere. This led him into a very interesting account of the two hostile systems of policy, which had divided the country from the formation of the Government, of one of which Mr. Jefferson was the head and General Hamilton of the other. After tracing their rise and progress, he showed that the present struggle was but a continuation of the original conflict between them, and that an opportunity was now afforded for the first time since the Government went into operation, to put down effectually that of which Hamilton was the head—the old Federal and consolidation party; and to give the opposite—that of

* See "Speeches," &c., No. 23.

which Jefferson was the head, the old State Rights Republican party—a permanent ascendancy. In conclusion he said, “It would be presumptuous in me, Mr. President, to advise those who are charged with the administration of the Government what course to adopt; but if they would hear the voice of one who desires nothing for himself, and whose only wish is to see the country prosperous, free, and happy, I would say to them, You are placed in the most remarkable juncture that has ever occurred since the establishment of the Federal Government, and, by seizing the opportunity, you may bring the vessel of state to a position where she may take a new tack, and thereby escape all the shoals and breakers into the midst of which a false steerage has run her, and bring her triumphantly into her destined port, with honour to yourselves and safety to those on board. Take your stand boldly; avow your object; disclose your measures, and let the people see clearly that you intend to do what Jefferson designed, but, from adverse circumstances, could not accomplish: to reverse the measures originating in principles and policy not congenial with our political system; to divest the Government of all undue patronage and influence; to restrict it to the few great objects intended by the Constitution; in a word, to give a complete ascendancy to the good old Virginia school over its antagonist, which time and experience have proved to be foreign and dangerous to our system of Government, and you may count with confidence on their support, without looking to other means of success. Should the Government take such a course at this favourable moment, our free and happy institutions may be perpetuated for generations, but, if a different, short will be their duration.” Had the course advised been early and openly avowed and vigorously pursued in time, very different might have been the termination of the last presidential election; and it may be added, that the advice is not less applicable to the coming than to the past election, and, if the Federal consolidation party is ever to be permanently put down, and the State Rights Republican party to gain the permanent ascendancy, it can only be effected by its adhering steadily and in good faith to the course advised.

The next session, that of 1839–40, which immediately preceded the late presidential election, was distinguished for the number and importance of the subjects that were agitated and discussed, and, it may be added, the ability and animation of the discussions. Among the more prominent of these may be included the public lands; the assumption of state debts; Mr. Calhoun’s resolutions in reference to the case of the *Enterprise*; the Bankrupt Bill, and the repeal of the salt-tax; in all of which Mr. Calhoun took a prominent part.* His speeches on his resolutions and on the assumption of state debts are among the ablest he ever delivered, and are worthy of the attention of all who desire to understand the subjects which they discuss.

The presidential election having terminated in favour of the Whigs, the next session was principally occupied in the discussions connected with the public lands, preparatory to one of the leading objects of policy contemplated under the new administration. Mr. Calhoun made three speeches on the subject:† one on the prospective Pre-emption Bill; another on an amendment to it proposed by Mr. Crittenden, as a substitute, to distribute the revenue from the public lands among the states; and, finally, one in reply to Mr. Webster and Mr. Clay. In these the whole policy of the public lands, and the various plans which were proposed in reference to them, were discussed. It is a subject which early attracted Mr. Calhoun’s attention, and has engrossed much of his reflection.

As far back as February, 1837, he offered a substitute, in the form of an amendment to the bill, to suspend the sales of the public lands, in which he proposed to cede to the new states the portion of the public lands lying within their respective limits, on certain conditions, which he accompanied by a speech

* See “Speeches,” &c., Nos. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29.

explanatory of his views and reasons. He followed up the subject in a speech delivered in January, 1839, on the Graduation Bill; and in May, 1840, an elaborate and full report was made from the Committee on Public Lands, and a bill introduced by him, containing substantially the same provisions with his original proposition. These, with his three speeches already referred to, contain a full view of his objects and reasons for the proposed cession.

There have been few measures ever presented for consideration so grossly misrepresented, or so much misconceived, as the one in question. It has been represented as a gift—a surrender—an abandonment of the public domain to the new states; and having assumed that to be its true character, the most unworthy motives have been attributed to the author for introducing it. Nothing is more untrue. The cession is neither more nor less than a conditional sale, not extended to the whole of the public domain, as represented, but to that portion in the new states respectively within whose limits they lie; the greater part of which are mere remnants, which have long since been offered for sale, without being sold.

The conditions on which they are proposed to be ceded or sold are drawn up with the greatest care, and with the strictest provisions to ensure their fulfilment; one of which is, that the state should pay 65 per cent. of the gross proceeds of the sale to the General Government, and retain only 35 per cent. for the trouble, expense, and responsibility attending their administration. Another is, that the existing laws, as they stand, except so far as they may be modified or authorized to be modified by the act of cession, shall remain unchanged, unless altered by the joint consent of the General Government and the several states. They are respectively authorized, if they should think proper, to adopt a system of graduation and pre-emption within well-defined and safe limits prescribed in the conditions; and the General Government is authorized to appoint officers in the several states, to whom its share of the proceeds of the sale shall be directly paid, without going into the state treasury; and these conditions are put under the guardianship of the courts, by providing, if they shall be violated, that all after rules by the state shall be null and void. So far from this being a gift, or an abandonment of the public lands to the new states, he has clearly proved, if there be truth in figures, that the Government would receive a greater amount of revenue from the lands in the new states, under the system he proposes, than under the present. These demonstrations are based on calculations which neither have nor can be impugned.

But his views extended far beyond dollars and cents in bringing forward the measure. He proposed to effect by it the high political objects of placing the new states on the same footing of equality and independence with the old, in reference to their domain; to cut off the vast amount of patronage which the public lands place in the hand of the executive; to withdraw them, as one of the stakes, from the presidential game; to diminish by one fourth the business of Congress, and with it the length and expense of its session; to enlist the Government of the new states on the side of the General Government; to aid in a more careful administration of the rest of the public domain, and thereby prevent the whole of it from becoming the property of the occupants from possession; and, finally, to prevent the too rapid extinction of Indian titles in proportion to the demand for lands from the increase of population, which he shows to be pregnant with great embarrassment and danger. These are great objects, of high political import; and if they could be effected by the measure proposed, it is justly entitled to be ranked among the wisest and most politic ever brought forward. That they can be effected, it is almost impossible for any well-informed and dispassionate mind deliberately to read the speeches and documents referred to, and to doubt.

CHAPTER VII.

Conclusion.

ONE of the first acts of the new administration was to call an extra session in the spring of 1841. Flushed with success, and confident in their power to consummate their entire system of policy, the Whigs assembled at the commencement of this session with overwhelming majorities in each House of Congress. The Republicans came, under circumstances well calculated to dispirit them, and too weak in point of numbers to have made an efficient opposition except under the most skilful management. It soon became manifest, as the plan of the campaign was developed, that the majority were determined to sweep everything by "coups-de-main," and would not depend upon address at the expense of time to take any post which could possibly be carried by storm. They commenced in the House of Representatives by wresting from the minority some of the most inestimable of the privileges of debate: privileges which the minority had enjoyed from the institution of the House of Representatives up to that time, and even during the war, when the opposition, by its factious course, seemed to have justly forfeited all respect, if it had not been deemed the sacred right of the tax-payer to be fully heard before new burdens were imposed upon him. But the minority were no longer allowed to debate questions in the Committee of the Whole until they were satisfied with the hearing.

The majority seized the power of arresting the debate whenever they chose, and thus, under the pretence of preventing factious delays, they acquired the means of terminating the discussion whenever it searched their purposes too deeply, or developed too strongly the consequences of their measures. Under this state of things, there was little left to the opposition but the mere vote; and the majority so completely acquired the whole sway in the lower House that it was by their grace only that their opponents could even remonstrate against their measures. In that body one overruling influence seemed to prevail, which did not emanate from within, but cast its shadow from without. Nor could even the fascinations of the splendid genius that controlled, relieve the dull, dreary, and depressing sense of dependance under which that House seemed to think and move. In the Senate, however, this tendency to the absolute power of a majority met with a severe and effective resistance. Determined never to yield up the arms which were necessary for the contest, they repelled every attempt to introduce "the gag." Foremost among the opposition stood Mr. Calhoun, and the parliamentary annals of the world hardly afford an instance of a more formidable array of intellectual force than that opposition then presented. Nothing could be more brilliant than its career through the whole of this short but eventful session.

The majority boldly assumed the old Federal positions upon the bank, the tariff, and the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands. Confident in their strength to carry it, they openly avowed their system. Profusion in public expenditure and special legislation seemed to be the order of the day. To the shattered victims of the war so long waged by the stock interests, a deliverance from all obligation for the past was declared in the Bankrupt Law; and the affiliated system of the bank, the tariff, and the distribution tempted them with an almost boundless prospect for future indulgence. The prodigal, the idle, the desperate, the visionary speculator, and even the cunning usurer, were each invited, by some appropriate hope, to join in the general foray, when the whole field of productive industry was to be given up to plunder. There seemed to be at last a prospect that Hamilton's system would prevail. With a

revenue decreasing daily, the Secretary of the Treasury proposed an annual expenditure of about \$27,000,000, and recommended a distribution among the states of the proceeds of the public lands. This lavish expenditure was to be maintained from customs alone: and through the influence of another bank expansion, our people were to be tempted to buy freely under the ruinous rates of duties which were proposed. Entreaty and remonstrance were alike unavailing with the majority, which for a while pursued its course without regard to the rights of the states or the freedom of individual pursuits, which were overwhelmed in their way. The whole hope of an efficient resistance to these measures in Congress now rested on the Senate, where the necessary privileges of debate were still retained. Our history does not present us an instance of an opposition more distinguished for its ability, or more untiring in its energy. Its searching gaze seemed to read the hidden purpose with almost as much certainty as it followed the open movements of its adversary. The purposes and principles of the system proposed by the majority were so clearly exposed by skillful amendments or in vigorous debate, that the public attention was fully aroused and directed to the consequences: consequences which were so powerfully and accurately depicted, that even the authors of the measures would have been appalled had they been less reckless of the future. The natural affinity between the tariff and distribution, which Mr. Calhoun had proclaimed so long before, was now clearly proved by the course of the majority during this session. So essential did they deem the distribution in order to secure the permanence of the tariff, that they ventured upon the former measure at every hazard, and at a time, too, when the revenue was deficient, and there was scarcely a hope that the customs would afford money enough for the current expenses of the Government. This ominous combination, which Mr. Calhoun had sacrificed so much to avert, was now at hand, and he met it in a speech,* which is one of the finest specimens of his power and style. There are portions of that speech in which he traces the consequences of distribution with a spirit of inquiry so eager, so searching, so keen, that he forgets himself and the personal feelings of the contest in the contemplation of the vision of ruin before him, and seems to seek relief from his forebodings by unbosoming himself to the country. The majority now faltered, for the first time, under the appeals of the opposition, and incorporated a provision for suspending the distribution when the duties upon imports exceeded a certain rate—a provision to which we have since owed the suspension of that dangerous act. The condition of the finances, which seemed not to have been fully appreciated by the majority, together with the proviso of which we have spoken, rendered the distribution law practically inefficient. Their bank bills had been vetoed by the President, from whom they were soon alienated: the Bankrupt Law was generally odious, and it seemed to require nothing more than the absurd and extravagant Tariff Act of the succeeding session to consummate their ruin. Thus did the opposition come out of the contest with flying colours at the close of that eventful session. The part which Mr. Calhoun bore in this crisis is so justly and so thoroughly appreciated by the country, that no particular comment upon it is necessary.

Suffice it to say, that the discussions of the extra session and of that which succeeded it were important and exciting. The most prominent of the extra session were upon the McLeod case, the Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Bankrupt Law.† The debate on the bank bills turned almost exclusively upon the details. At the succeeding session the principal subjects were the Treasury Note Bill, the Veto power, Mr. Clay's resolutions in reference to the revenue and expenditures, the Loan Bill, and the Tariff Bill. To Mr. Calhoun's speeches upon these subjects we simply refer, because they are so recent as to be familiar to all, and not because they are less worthy of study than some others of a more distant date, from which we have extracted freely. Indeed, we have so often found occasion to recommend the perusal of the par-

* See "Speeches," &c., No. 31.

† Ibid., No. 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.

sicular speech to which we were referring, that we were almost afraid of exciting the suspicion that our object was more to eulogize the statesman than to instruct the reader; and yet we are sure that all who study these speeches will acquit us of such a motive. We have recommended their perusal because we believed that they gave the best view of the state of public affairs, and of the mode in which a statesman would deal with such events, which has yet been furnished; nor did we know of any other models, either of statesmanship or oratory, in our own parliamentary annals, to which we could better invite the attention of the student. Indeed, we could scarcely direct him amiss among these speeches for specimens of luminous conceptions, or of that simple and natural order of propositions which constitutes a peculiar charm in style, and enables the orator to fascinate his audience, and carry them along with him. The English language affords no finer examples than are to be found in these speeches of the power of analysis in eliminating the truth of a case from circumstances which obscure and embarrass it. Nor are there any more attractive for novel and profound speculation, in which he sometimes deals when such lights and shadows are necessary to complete the picture which he is drawing.

In how many of the unexplored regions of human thought will the attentive reader be startled to find the trace of his footstep, and yet so rapid is he in his flight over his subject, that he scarcely takes time to set up his flag on the lands which he has found, or to perpetuate the evidences of his title to the honours of discovery.

Here, perhaps, we ought to leave the reader to draw his own conclusions as to the nature of the man and of his public services from the narrative which we have given; and yet we feel that it will be impossible for him to understand either fully, even with the aids which we have offered him, without a careful study of his speeches, reports, and other public addresses, in connexion with the history of the times: a study to which we again commend him, as well worthy of the time and labour which it may cost. For ourselves, we can truly say, that our estimate of his public services has increased with our opportunities for studying them, and that our admiration of his character has grown as his private and political history became more familiar to us. Indeed, it would almost seem to us, at times, that it belonged to the destiny of the American people to have reared up such a man, and that one of its necessities required him to pursue that long and stormy career, through which he has watched and helped to steer the ship of state with an eye that never winked and an energy that never tired. It required his indomitable will, and a nature thus rarely constituted, to have maintained this eager and incessant labour for the happiness of the American people, and to have led, for so long a period, the triumphal march of our glorious institutions. With a turn of mind naturally philosophical, his great power of analysis and his faculty of attentive observation early enabled him to form a system for the conduct of life, both in his private and public relations, and to determine within his own mind upon the true ends of human action; ends which he has pursued with a matchless constancy, while a knowledge of his ultimate destination and of the high objects of his journey has cheered him along through the thorny paths of public life. Of all the men whom we have ever seen, he seems to us to have surveyed most completely the whole ground of human action. To these advantages he adds another, which constitutes, perhaps, his highest quality as a statesman. It is the faculty of considering circumstances in their combinations, and of determining their relative power in propelling events. To analyze this combination, or "juncture" (as he sometimes calls it), and to determine the resultant of all these forces, is, in his opinion, the highest and rarest faculty of a statesman. If he values this power more than most others, it is because he has derived more benefit from its use, and well may he estimate highly that quality which, by affording him an insight into futurity far beyond the usual range of human vision, has given him such

control over events. These were the gifts in whose strength he presented himself on the stage of the world in the very commencement of his public life, as one fully grown and armed for the trials which belonged to the time and the place. True to those noble instincts which spring more from a Divine source than from human reason, he ever leaned to liberty as against power, and early learned to resist those temptations which so often lead man to increase the power of the mass, which he is content to share as a member, at the expense of those separate and individual rights of which nature constituted him the peculiar guardian, and which were only given as the means of self-culture, and as indispensable to the moral elevation of his being.

His public life may be divided into two grand epochs: the first, in which he put forth his whole energies to enable his countrymen to maintain their independence against foreign aggression; and the second, in which he undertook the more difficult task of freeing their domestic legislation from those devices by which one was enabled to prey upon another. In each of these periods he has been emphatically "the man of his time," and he has ever regarded the tenets of the Republican party as indicating the best means of attaining these ends under our form of government. Of all men now living, he, perhaps, has contributed most to illustrate and establish that political creed. We are aware that we expose ourselves here to the sneers of some of those literal expositors of the law, who believe that man was made for the Sabbath and not the Sabbath for man. But we repeat the assertion, that in all the public exigencies in which he was called to act, he made the nearest practical approach to the great ends of the Republican party which human wisdom or foresight could then devise. In all the great measures of our government since he first entered Congress, his influence has been felt either in their origination or modification, and to this influence more than any other the Republican party is indebted for its present proud position before the world.

Morally considered, the great objects of the Republican party are simple and few. Its first is to preserve, as far as possible, the independence of individual action and pursuit; and it rejects all limitations upon this independence which are not essential to the great ends of social organization. It regards all of those powers which man wields in his aggregate or corporate capacity as so many limitations upon his individual rights, and it yields those which are indispensable to the institution of society as so many concessions which necessity has extorted from liberty. These are the terms upon which they would grant Government its powers; and they would administer the power thus limited with an equal regard for all who are entitled to share the benefits of the trust. Tried by these tests, Mr. Calhoun has nothing to fear, when the circumstances are considered under which he was called to act.

In the first epoch of his public life, we were forced to defend ourselves in a war with the most formidable nation of the globe, and with the only power whose arm was long enough to reach us in our distant position, and within the defences of so many natural barriers. In its commencement it was a war of independence, and it might become a contest for existence. In this state of things, it was in our aggregate power alone that we were to find the strength to resist foreign assaults, and every American patriot sought the means of increasing it as far as the limitations of the Constitution would permit. The war was a measure of the Republican party, and the unpatriotic course of the opposition devolved upon them alone the duty of devising the means to prosecute it. Under these circumstances, the Republican party deflected from the natural line of their direction, and sought to concentrate as much power in the Government as they then believed indispensable for the successful conduct of the war. How far they were right or wrong, it is not our province here to determine; but certain it is, that there was much in the overruling power of circumstances to justify their course and excuse their errors, if errors they may be called. With

how much more justice may the same apology be made for Mr. Calhoun himself. The leading advocate of hostilities and the chairman of the committee which reported the declaration of war, with a deep responsibility to the country for the success of that contest, which he was accused of precipitating; young, ardent, and indignant at the course of foreign and domestic enemies, it is surprising that he was not less scrupulous of the Constitution in calling forth the means of defending it, and our people against foreign expositions of law and justice, which ultimately might have overturned all, unless arrested by our successful resistance. And yet, upon how many great occasions did he restrain the Republican party from aberrations from their principles.

It was he who opposed the restrictive system against the majority of the party. It was he, too, who took a prominent part in resisting the system of forced loans in the case of the merchants' bonds, and who defeated Mr. Dallas's vast scheme of a national bank to issue irredeemable paper, which was recommended by a Republican President and supported by the party. Session after session did he combat it, until he succeeded in restoring to the country a specie-paying paper, and something like uniformity in the medium in which its taxes were collected. And although the opinions of that day, growing out of the exigencies of the war, exaggerated the necessity for roads and canals as military defences, and called for the general use of a power which was given by the Constitution within the narrowest limits, it is remarkable that he has nowhere expressly affirmed the existence of such a power in the Federal Government.

His views of the proper use to be made of this power, if it existed, or could be obtained, when given in obedience to a call of the House of Representatives, were perhaps the ablest ever taken of the relation of this subject to our military defences, yet he cautiously abstained from deciding the constitutional question. This was before the Republican party had paused in that career in which they were concentrating power within to defend themselves against attacks from without. In a review of this period of his life, it may with truth be said, that all those acts for which he has been reproached as departures from the State Rights creed, were substitutes for much worse measures, which, but for him, his party would have adopted; and, although some of them were neither the wisest nor best, according to the present standard of information, they were each the nearest approach to the true Republican line of action which was permitted by the state of public knowledge and feeling at the time. But, whatever may have been the errors of the early part of his *public* life, he nobly redeemed them in the second period, which commenced from his election to the vice-presidency. It was during the interval then allowed for reflection that he first examined thoroughly the working of the machinery of the Government in its internal as well as its external relations. He was among the first of the Republican party to pause in that career by which power had been consolidated in the Federal Government, without due reflection upon its consequences to the states and the people. He saw that the distribution of the political powers of our system, as contemplated by the Constitution, had been deranged, and that vast affiliated stock interests had been permitted to grow up almost unconsciously, which threatened to absorb the whole power and influence of the Confederacy, and to substitute a government of the few for that of the many; and, worse than all, he saw many of the Republican party so deeply entangled in the consequences of past action, and so little aware of the mischiefs which threatened them, that it was impossible to receive their co-operation in the efforts which were necessary to save the Government from deep organic derangement, and the party itself from utter annihilation. His position gave him a deep interest in the unity of the party, if he had looked to himself alone; the road to office was open and easy; but the higher and more alluring path to fame lay along a steeper route and over rugged and difficult precipices. Between these alternatives he did not hesitate, but determined at once to strike

the blows he believed to be necessary to save the country and restore the party to its pristine purity of faith and practice. We have given the history of the memorable contest in which, with unexampled odds against him, he maintained his foothold and accomplished his grand design.

We have seen the series of skilful movements and masterly combinations by which, with comparatively few forces, he occupied and manfully contested every inch of disputed territory, until he finally struck down the protective system with blows from which it never can entirely recover in the face of the formidable array against him, wielding the battle-axe of Richard or the cimeter of Saladin, as strength or skill might best serve his turn. Ever ready, cheerful, and confident, he sometimes obtained concessions from mere respect to his gallantry and prowess, which no force at his disposal could then have extorted. Experience now proved that he had not been a moment too soon in striking at the protective system. The Republican party had been gradually wasting under the assaults of their open enemies, and the moral influences of the stock interests. The banks, deprived for the time of their natural ally the tariff, were forced to take the field alone, and the difficulty which the Republicans experienced in coping with this single interest, proved how impossible it would have been for them to have resisted the whole affiliated system if its strength had been unimpaired, and its united forces directed against them. They now saw that Mr. Calhoun had been warring all along, not against them, but a common enemy, which, but for him, might have overwhelmed all together. Mr. Calhoun, who had left his ancient friends in their strength to reform, but not to destroy, now returned to them in their weakness to cheer, to animate, to rally, and defend them, and was prouder of their alliance upon principle in their period of adversity than he would have been of all the honours which they could have heaped upon him in their prosperity. It was not in his nature to regard the execrations which these stock interests poured out upon him. They had too often tried the temper of his steel not to know the force of the arm which wielded it, and it was perhaps with as much of despair as rage that privilege saw its ancient and well-trained adversary take the field with additional strength against it. Mr. Calhoun did not now direct his attention so much to mere affairs of outposts as to placing the party upon that solid platform of principle, in which he well knew that the whole battering train of the Federal hosts could never effect a breach. With a true military eye, he readily seized all the advantages of position, and under his advice mainly, they have, at every sacrifice, directed column after column upon this elevated post, where they now command the field, and from which, if not abandoned or lost by want of vigilance, they must ultimately recover the country.

He is now about to retire from the theatre of public life, neither wearied nor worn, but because his work is done, so far, at least, as senatorial life can afford him any useful part to play. If there be any new field of action worthy of his powers, and as yet untrodden by him, it is in that highest executive sphere, for which the character of his mind and the experience of his life have so eminently fitted him. It is, perhaps, only upon this theatre that his countrymen would not now exclaim, "Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage," and it is there that they will probably require him to consummate, as perhaps he alone can do, those great Republican reforms so cherished by the party, as destined to commend it to the grateful regards of posterity. We cannot better close this sketch than by extracting a portrait of Mr. Calhoun as a man and an orator, which was drawn by a friendly hand, it is true, but which we recognise as being so just and well executed that we gladly adopt it as our own.

In his person Mr. Calhoun is slender and tall. His countenance, at rest, is strikingly marked with decision and firmness. In conversation it is highly animated, expressive, and indicative of genius. His eyes are large, dark, brilliant, and penetrating, and leave no doubt, at first view, of a high order of intellect. His manners are easy, natural, and unassuming, and as frank as they are cordial and kind. In all his domestic relations his life is without a blemish. He has none of the cautious reserve and mystery of common politicians; for he has nothing to conceal or disguise. He is accessible to all, agreeable, animated, instructive, and eloquent in conversation, and communicates his opinions with the utmost freedom. Some politicians seek popularity by carefully avoiding responsibility. Whatever popularity Mr. Calhoun possesses has, on the contrary, been acquired by bold and fearless assumption of responsibility on all critical and trying occasions. His judgment is so clear and discriminating, that he seems to possess a sort of prophetic vision of future events, and on occasions when most men doubt and hesitate, he decides with confidence, follows up his decision with undoubting firmness, and has never failed in the end to be justified by time, the arbiter of all things.

Few men have been called upon to pass through scenes of higher political excitement, and to encounter mere vigorous and unrelenting opposition than Mr. Calhoun; yet, amid all the prejudices which party feeling engenders, and all the jealousy of political rivals, and all the animosity of political opponents, no one has yet ventured to hazard his own reputation for judgment or sincerity so far as to doubt one moment his great and commanding talents.

As an orator, Mr. Calhoun stands in the foremost rank of parliamentary speakers. On first rising in debate, he always felt the anxiety of diffidence, arising from a sensibility which is almost always the companion of true genius. His manner of speaking is energetic, ardent, rapid, and marked by a solemn earnestness, which leaves no doubt of his sincerity and deep conviction. His style is pure, forcible, logical, and condensed; often figurative for illustration, never for ornament. His mind is well stored with the fruits of learning, but still better with those of observation and reflection. Hence depth, originality, and force characterize all his speeches. He lays his premises on a foundation too broad, solid, and deep to be shaken; his deductions are clear and irresistible; "the strong power of genius," to adopt the language of the eloquent Pinkney, in referring to Mr. Calhoun's splendid speech on the treaty-making power, "from a higher region than that of argument, throws on his subjects all the light with which it is the prerogative of genius to invest and illustrate everything." And his speeches, full of the most elevated and patriotic sentiments, after conquering the understanding, take the heart entirely captive, and carry along his hearers, often unconsciously, and sometimes against their will, to the point he desires.

Mr. Calhoun had attained so high a reputation as a member of Congress, that it was thought by many that he was leaving his appropriate field when he accepted the appointment of Secretary of War. On the contrary, his new situation only presented another theatre for the exercise of his great and diversified talents. The distinguishing feature of his mind, the power of analysis, was now to be exercised in the practical business of Government, and at once, as by enchantment, order, efficiency, and perfect accountability sprang from the chaos in which he found the department, and demonstrated that his energy in execution was equal to his wisdom in organizing, and left it doubtful whether his legislative talents were not surpassed by his practical ability in administration.

As a statesman, in the most enlarged and elevated sense of the term,

Mr. Calhoun has no superior. A philosophical observer of men and of their affairs, he analyzes and reduces all things to their original elements, and draws thence those general principles, which, with inconceivable rapidity and unerring certainty, he applies on all occasions, and banishes the perplexity and doubt by which ordinary minds are overwhelmed and confounded. By this wonderful faculty, he is enabled to decide at once, not only what measures are at present necessary for a government novel in its principles, and placed in circumstances of which there is no precedent in the history of mankind, but, by discerning results through their causes, to look into futurity, and to devise means for carrying on our beloved country in a direct path to the high and glorious destiny which, under the guidance of wisdom and virtue, awaits her.

To the highest powers of mind Mr. Calhoun unites those elevated moral qualities, which are equally essential with ability to complete the character of a perfect statesman: inflexible integrity, honour without a stain, disinterestedness, temperance, and industry; a firmness of purpose which disdains to calculate the consequences of doing his duty; prudence and energy in action, devotion to his country, and inextinguishable love of liberty and justice. To these great qualities, perhaps, we ought to add a lofty ambition; but it is an ambition that prefers glory to office and power, which looks upon the latter only as a means for acquiring the former, and which, by the performance of great and virtuous actions for the accomplishment of noble ends, aims at the establishment of a widely-extended and ever-during fame. This ingredient, which enters into the composition of all great and powerful minds, seems intended by Providence to stimulate them to the highest pitch of exertion in the service of mankind; and if it be a defect, it is one which Mr. Calhoun shares, as well as all their high qualities, with the most perfect models of Greek and Roman excellence.

To those who have not been attentive observers of the life, character, and conduct of Mr. Calhoun, or who may have been alienated by political conflicts, the above portraiture may seem to derive some of its colouring from the partial pencil of friendship. If an intimate connexion of that kind for more than a quarter of a century may be supposed to tincture the writer's mind with partiality, it will be allowed, at the same time, that it affords the best possible opportunity of forming an accurate estimate of the moral and political character of the subject of this memoir. His *statements of fact and opinion he knows to be entirely authentic*; and after a deliberate review of every sentence and word he has written, he finds nothing which a reverence for justice and truth will allow him to alter.

SPEECHES, &c., OF THE HON. JOHN C. CALHOUN,

REFERRED TO IN HIS LIFE, AND WHICH ARE PUBLISHED IN SEPARATE VOLUMES, AND NUMBERED 1 TO 38.

Speech delivered in the House of Representatives in 1812 (1st session of 12th Congress), in reply to John Randolph and in favour of *Preparation for War*.

See Life, page 9, and "Speeches," &c., No. 1.

Onslow's Letters in reply to Patrick Henry (Nos. 1 and 2).

See Life, p. 32, and "Speeches," &c., No. 2.

Address, stating his opinion of the relations which the States and General Government bear to each other. South Carolina, July 26, 1831.

See Life, p. 38, and "Speeches," &c., No. 3.

Letter to General Hamilton on the subject of *State Interposition*. South Carolina, Aug. 28, 1832.

See Life, p. 41, and "Speeches," &c., No. 4.

The following *Speeches* and *Reports* were delivered in the Senate of the United States during a period of ten years (from February, 1833, to February, 1843):

Feb. 15, 1833. Speech against the *Force Bill*.

See Life, p. 46; and "Speeches," &c., No. 5.

Feb. 26, 1833. Speech on his Resolutions and in reply to Mr. Webster.

See Life, p. 46, and "Speeches," &c., No. 6.

Jan. 13, 1834. Speech on the Subject of the Removal of the Deposites.

See Life, p. 49, and "Speeches," &c., No. 7.

March 26, 1834. Speech on Mr. Webster's Proposition to Recharter the United States Bank.

See Life, p. 52, and "Speeches," &c., No. 8.

April 9, 1834. Speech on the Bill to Repeal the Force Act.

See "Speeches," &c., No. 9.

Feb. 9, 1835. A Report on the Extent of Executive Patronage.

See Life, p. 55, and "Speeches," &c., No. 10.

Feb. 4, 1836. A Report on that portion of the President's Message which related to the adoption of efficient measures to prevent the circulation of incendiary Abolition Publications through the mail.

See Life, p. 58, and "Speeches," &c., No. 11.

March 9, 1836. Speech on the Abolition Petitions.

See Life, p. 58, and "Speeches," &c., No. 12.

April 12, 1836. Speech on the Bill to Prohibit Deputy Postmasters from receiving or transmitting through the mail certain papers therein mentioned.

See Life, p. 58, and "Speeches," &c., No. 13.

Feb., 1837. Speech on the Reception of Abolition Petitions.

See Life, p. 58, and "Speeches," &c., No. 14.

May 28, 1836. Speech on the Public Deposites.

See "Speeches," &c., No. 15.

Jan. 2, 1837. Speech on the Bill for the Admission of Michigan.

See Life, p. 59, and "Speeches," &c., No. 16.

Jan. 5, 1837. Speech on the same subject.

See Life, p. 59, and "Speeches," &c., No. 17.

Sept. 19, 1837. Speech on the Bill authorizing an Issue of Treasury Notes.

See Life, p. 60, and "Speeches," &c., No. 18.

Oct. 3, 1837. Speech on his Amendment to separate the Government from the Banks.

See Life, p. 60, and "Speeches," &c., No. 19.

Feb. 15, 1838. Speech on the Sub-Treasury Bill.

See Life, p. 62, and "Speeches," &c., No. 20.

March 10, 1838. Speech on the same, in reply to Mr. Clay.

See Life, p. 62, and "Speeches," &c., No. 21.

March 22, 1838. Speech on the same, in reply to Mr. Webster.

See Life, p. 62, and "Speeches," &c., No. 22.

Feb. 22, 1839. Speech on the Bill to prevent the Interference of certain Federal Officers in Elections.

See Life, p. 64, and "Speeches," &c., No. 23.

Feb. 5, 1840. Speech on the Report of Mr. Grundy, of Tennessee, in relation to the Assumption of the Debts of the States by the Federal Government.

See Life, p. 65, and "Speeches," &c., No. 24.

- March 13, 1840. *Speech on his Resolutions in reference to the Case of the Enterprise.*
See Life, p. 65, and "Speeches," &c., No. 25.
- June 2, 1840. *Speech on the Bankrupt Bill.*
See Life, p. 65, and "Speeches," &c., No. 26.
- Jan. 12, 1841. *Speech on the Prospective Pre-emption Bill.*
See Life, p. 65, and "Speeches," No. 27.
- Jan. 23, 1841. *Speech on the Bill to Distribute the Proceeds of the Public Lands.*
See Life, p. 65, and "Speeches," &c., No. 28.
- Jan. 30, 1841. *Speech in reply to the Speeches of Mr. Webster and Mr. Clay on Mr. Crittenden's Amendment to the Pre-emption Bill.*
See Life, p. 65, and "Speeches," &c., No. 29.
- June 11, 1841. *Speech on the Case of M^r Leod.*
See Life, p. 68, and "Speeches," &c., No. 30.
- Aug. 24, 1841. *Speech on the Distribution Bill.*
See Life, p. 68, and "Speeches," &c., No. 31.
- Jan. 25, 1842. *Speech on the Treasury Note Bill.*
See Life, p. 68, and "Speeches," &c., No. 32.
- Feb. 28, 1842. *Speech in Support of the Veto Power.*
See Life, p. 68, and "Speeches," &c., No. 33.
- March 16, 1842. *Speech on Mr. Clay's Resolutions in relation to the Revenue and Expenditures of the Government.*
See Life, p. 68, and "Speeches," &c., No. 34.
- April 12, 1842. *Speech on the Loan Bill.*
See Life, p. 68, and "Speeches," &c., No. 35.
- Aug. 5, 1842. *Speech on the Passage of the Tariff Bill.*
See Life, p. 68, and "Speeches," &c., No. 36.
- Aug. 16, 1842. *Speech on the Treaty of Washington.*
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- Feb., 1843. *Speech on the Bill for the Occupation of the Oregon Territory.* 90
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